THE WORKS OF Mr. William Shakespear.

The Tenth VOLUME.

CONTAINING
VENUS and ADONIS.
TARQUIN and LUCRECE.
WITH
His MISCELLANY POEMS.

To which are added,

Critical REMARKS on his PLAYS,

And an ESSAY on the ART, RISE, and PROGRESS of the STAGE, in Greece, Rome, and England. Both by Mr. Gildon.

Also a GLOSSARY of the Old Words used in these Works.

The Whole Revis'd and Corrected, with a PREFACE,
By Dr. Sewell.

LONDON:
To the Right Honourable

The Lord WALPOLE.

My Lord,

I SHOULD not have dared to approach Your Lordship with a less Poet in my Hand than SHAKESPEARE; the dead Ornament of the English Nation, being the most proper Present to its Living Glory. He, My Lord, has shared the Fate common to every great Genius, receiving very ill Returns for all his Beauties and Benefits; in amends for which, my present Endeavour is to wipe off the Dust of Age, Error and Ignorance, and screen his valuable Remains under Your Lordship's Protection.

YOUR Lordship knowing his Excellencies, can happily compare them with the Antients, and
The DEDICATION.

and have thereby a peculiar Right to this Offering. That Nurse of Arts and Sciences, that Builder and Refiner of Mankind, (with what Pride I say our common Mother, ETON!) has furnished You with a true Taste of Letters; so that the SHAKESPEARE might fear You, as a Judge, yet be now prides himself in courting You, as a Patron.

IN Your Travels, Your Name, the best Harbinger, prepared for You at every Court a Reception suitable to the Son of Mr. WALPOLE. You was then the Representative of the English Genius Abroad, displaying that Probity, Integrity, and Openness of Soul, that distinguishes this Nation from all others.

IN the Situation You are now in, My LORD, You have nothing to do but to imitate the Great Pattern before You, to the Joy of Your Friends, and the Disappointment not of Yours, so much as of Your Country’s Enemies. You have the noblest Incentives: For it is with You as with young Ascanius,

Te pater AENEAS & Avunculus excitat HECTOR.

I am,

My LORD,

Your Lordship’s most obedient humble Servant,

G. SEWELL.
EN of Learning and Leisure have usually
busied themselves in reprinting the Works
of the celebrated antient Authors in the
Greek and Latin Languages: By which
means it happens, that of many of these
we have more than we need, and Num-
ers of no Use at all; the Editors being
so very inconsiderable, as to drive Gentlemen of Taste
back to the earliest Impressions of Books, where the
genuine Sense appears in a truer Light than in the idle
Comments of our modern Publishers. First Editions are
rarely to be seen, but like Jewels in the Cabinets of the
richly Curious; and many new ones bear little Value,
either from their Commonness, or Coarseness. What
then has been done by the really Learned to the dead
Languages, by treading backwards into the Paths of An-
tiquity, and reviving and correcting good old Authors,
we in Justice owe to our own great Writers, both in
Prose and Poetry. They are in some degree our Clas-
sics; on their Foundation we must build, as the Formers
and Refiners of our Language.
The PREFACE.

In reforming old Palaces, we find that Time and Carelessness have kept equal Pace in spreading Ruin; and so it fares with Authors, who carry with the Rust of Antiquity, the Blemishes of Neglect and ill Usage. Of this, Shakespeare is a very remarkable Instance, who has been handed down from Age to Age very incorrect, his Errors increasing by Time, and being almost constantly republished to his Disgrace. Whatever were the Faults of this great Poet, the Printers have been hitherto as careful to multiply them, as if they had been real Beauties; thinking perhaps with the Indians, that the disfiguring a good Face with Scars of artificial Brutes, had improv'd the Form and Dignity of the Person. A fine Writer thus treated, looks like Deiphobus among the Shades, so maim'd by his pretended Friend, that the good Æneas hardly knew him again; and with him we may cry out,

Quis tam crudelis optavit fumere Pœnas?

The Answer is easy, the Tribe of Editors, Correctors, and Printers, who have usually as little Pity for a Helen, as she had for her Husband.

These Abominations of the Press, with several others, we shall no doubt find remov'd in the new Edition of his Plays. When a Genius of similar Fire and Fancy, temper'd with a learned Patience, sits down to consider what Shakespeare would Think, as well as what he could Write, we may then expect to see his Works answer our Idea of the Man.

fair be it from any Hopes of mine, that this Edition of his Poems should equal his curious Correctness: a less faulty one than the former is all the Reader is to expect. A short History, and some few occasional Remarks will be added, to give Light to some Passages, as well of the Author, as of Mr. Gildon.

This Gentleman republished these Poems from an old Impression, in the Year 1710, at the same time with Mr. Rowe's Publication of his Plays. He uses many Arguments to prove them genuine, but the best is the Style, Spirit, and Fancy of Shakespeare, which are not to be mistaken by any tolerable Judge in these Matters.
The PREFACE.

Venus and Adonis, Tarquin and Lucrece, are out of Dispute, they being put to the Press, and dedicated by the Author himself to the Earl of Southampton his great Patron. So that Mr. Rowe is evidently mistaken when he says, That his Venus and Adonis was the only Piece of Poetry he publish'd himself; there being the same Authority for his Tarquin and Lucrece, as for the other.

If we allow the rest of these Poems to be genuine (as I think Mr. Gildon has prov'd them) the Occasional ones will appear to be the first of his Works. A young Muse must have a Mistress to play off the beginnings of Fancy, nothing being so apt to raise and elevate the Soul to a pitch of Poetry, as the Passion of Love.

We find, to wander no farther that Spenser, Cowley, and many others, paid their First-fruits of Poetry to a real, or an imaginary Lady. Upon this occasion I conjecture, that Shakespeare took fire on reading our admirable Spenser, who went but just before him in the Line of Life, and was in all probability the Poet most in Vogue at that time. To make this Argument the stronger, Spenser is taken notice of in one of these little Pieces as a Favourite of our Author's. He alludes certainly to the Fairy Queen, when he mentions his Deep Conceit; that Poem being entirely Allegorical. It has been remark'd, that more Poets have sprung from Spenser than all our other English Writers; to which let me add an Observation of the late Dr. Garth, That most of our late ones have been spoil'd by too early an Admiration of Milton. Be it to Spenser then that we owe Shakespeare!

The fairest Scyon of the fairest Tree.

In Metaphor, Allusion, Description, and all the strongest and highest Colourings of Poetry, they both are certainly without Equals. Spenser indeed trod more in the Paths of Learning, borrow'd, improv'd, and heighten'd all he imitated: But Shakespeare's Field is Nature, and there he undoubtedly triumphs without a Rival. His Imagination is a perpetual Fountain of Delight, and all drawn from the same Source: even his Wildnesses are the Wildnesses of Nature. So that Milton seems to have hit his Character best, when he says,

Shakespear,
The Preface.

Shakespear, Fancy's sweetest Child,  
Warbles his native Wood-notes wild.

The Child of Fancy, with the additional Epithet of sweet-est, is an Expression perfectly fine, becoming both the Praifer, and the Praised, and exactly after the manner of the antient Poets.

And yet I cannot place his Learning so low as others have done, there being evident Marks thro' all his Writings of his Knowledge in the Latin Language, and the Roman History. The Translation of Ovid's two Epistles, Paris to Helen, and her Answer, gives a sufficient Proof of his Acquaintance with that Poet. Nor are these Letters so very easy for a common Translator: For there is a good deal of the Heathen Mythology and Poetical Fictions, of which Shakespeare misses none, but is ever faithful to the Original. How they may be receiv'd in these Days of flowing Versification I know not; but I have a Translation of the Metamorphoses of the same Age, far inferior to these Epistles.

But to return to Mr. Gildon, the Republisher of these Poems. He has prefixed to them an Essay on the Rise and Progress of the Stage, and added Remarks on all his Plays, in order to let the Reader into the Beauties, and Defects of Shakespeare. As to the Essay, tho' there have been many Things wrote in a loose unconnected manner on the same Subject, yet I have seen nothing in our Tongue so regular, so fully explanatory, or so well supported by Instances from the antient Tragic Poets. One may safely say, that this was the Study of his whole Life, the darling and over-ruling Passion of his Soul, which work'd off, and shew'd it self on all Occasions both in Discourse and Composition. Sophocles and Euripides were his Idols, whom he look'd upon with a sort of religious Veneration, and took a Pride in making Converts to his Opinion, by displaying their hidden Glories to the rest of Mankind. This intimate Acquaintance with these great Originals, made him an excellent Judge of what deviated from their Standard. Great modern Names and Authorities were never his Guides, but a Conformity to the just Rules of the best antient
antient Critics, and the first Writers. For this Reason
the Reader will find him in the Course of the Remarks,
bearing very hard on Mr. Dryden, tho at the same time
that he condemn'd the Critic, he admir'd the Poet.

THE same cannot be said of his Style, as his Sense;
his Expression being often dark, his Sentences long, un-
equal, and crowded with Words of the same Significa-
tion. A depression of Fortune, want of Health and
Leisure, allow'd him no Time for the Filings, and Pol-
lishings of a correct Writer. And yet with all his Im-
perfections, there is great Matter of Improvement to be
pick'd out of his Essay, and Remarks.

Cum fluaret Lutulentus, erat quod tollere velles.

I must not here leave Mr. Gildon without taking notice
of an Argument he has brought to prove these Poems
genuine; which is the Use of the Compound and De-
compound Epithets, as if this was in a manner peculiar
to SHAKESPEARE. Others have carried the matter
farther, and from thence argu'd SHAKESPEARE into
an Understanding of the Greek Language, from whence
they are deriv'd. Any one who is acquainted with old
English Books, may see they were in use before our Au-
thor's Time; and as for their being taken from the
Greeks, that will appear ridiculous, when we consider
how easily those Epithets are form'd. For allow but any
Number adopted into our Tongue, and a hundred may
be coin'd in as many Minutes. For Instance, if I read
far-shooting from the Greek, could not I profently com-
 pound Fire-daring, and twenty others?

BUT since we are upon this Subject, let us examine
it a little more closely. I wish the Patrons of this Prac-
tice would give us any Reason for flinging in this unnat-
tural foreign Mixture into our Language, when we have
Words of Signification, and Sound sufficient to answer
our Ideas. What occasion is there for Adulteration,
when we have current Coin enough of our own? All
our best and modest Writers have stretch'd no farther
than the Compound, and those sparingly, and in Tran-
slation, where they will best bear. If the Compounds
may be bore with Patience, the Decomounds are mere
Monsters;
The PREFACE.

Monsters; as these of our Author, the Hot-fcent-smelling Hounds, the Dew-be-dabbled Morn, &c. They offend the Ear, and cannot be repeated without uneasiness. The Genius of every Tongue is different; and tho the Greek abounds with these beautifully extravagant Liberties, neither the severe Chastity of the Latin, nor our own will allow of them. Vida an excellent Critic is of the same Opinion as to the Latin; and as his Words may have some Influence, I shall give a Translation of a Passage or two to this Purpose.

"Multa tamen Graiae fert Indulgentia Linguæ,
Quæ nostras minus addecent graviora frequentes.

Unnumber'd Liberties may Greece become,
Which suit not the severer Tongue of Rome.

But he is fuller soon after; as here,

"Verba etiam tum Bina juvat conjungere in unum;
Mollitèr inter se vinclo sociæ jugali:
Verum Plura nefas vulgo congesta coire,
Ipfaque Quadrifidis subnii corpora membris.
Itala nec passim fert Monstra Tricorpora Tellus.
Horresco diros sonitus, ac levia fundo
Invitus perterritectas per Carmina Voces.

Two Single Words in pleasing Union join,
If gently wedded in a Social Line:
But more nor Rule, nor Decency afford,
Verse hobbles on a long-four-jointed Word.
The Decomponds of Three, are very rare,
And Monsters foreign to our Latian Air.
Harsh jarring Sounds strike grating on the Sense,
And give my Reason, as my Ear, Offence.
Unwillingly I force in gliding Song
A grumbling Thrice-re-gurgling Word along.

OUR Language, as it now stands, bears a near Affinity to the Latin, and most of its Rules are become our own. Writers should therefore consider first what our Tongue will bear, know its Original, how it has been improv'd,
The P R E F A C E.

improv'd, and from whence it has borrowed, before
they begin with such bold Innovations. A single Autho-

rity is neither a Rule, nor a Guide, Casaubon de Lingua

Anglica vetere will show them the Excellence, Force,

Power and Compass of our Mother English; after which
they will hardly seek out for harsh and unnatural Imita-
tions of a Dead Language.

BUT enough of this. It is not my Province to speak

of Shakespear's Plays; only I cannot but observe

that some of them do not answer their Titles. In Julius

Caesar for Instance, there is little of the Man, or his me-

morable Exploits, unless what is said after his Death;

and if any one were to form an Idea of him from what

Shakespear makes him speak, he would make but

an indifferent Figure for the Foremost of Mankind.

Hear

only his Character from Tully, an Enemy—" Fuit in

illo Ingenium, Ratio, Memoria, Litteræ, Cura, Co-

gitatio, Diligentia: res bello gesserat, quamvis Rei-

publicæ calamitas, attamen Magnas. Multos annos

regnare eft meditatus: magno labore, magnis peri-
culis, quod cognoscerat, effecerat: muneribus, mo-

numentis, congiariis, epulis multitudinem impetimam

deliniebat: suos præmii, adversarios Clementiam Specie

devinixerat. Quid multa? attulerat jam liberæ Civili-
tati, partim metu, partim patientiæ, Consuetudinem

Serviendi."

A Caesar thus qualified, and shewn in all these Lights,

were fit for the Pen of an Addison, or a Congreve; and

then we might cry out with Anthony,

Here was a Caesar—when comes such Another?

I THOUGHT to say no more to his Plays; but

the Character my Lord Shaftesbury gives them is too

considerable to be omitted. He was himself a fine Wri-
ter, and an excellent Judge of Nature, so that his Testi-

mony will bear a just sway with the Reader. His words

are, "Our old Dramatic Poet, Shakespear, may

witness for our good Ear and manly Relish. Notwith-

standing his natural Rudeness, his unpolish'd Style, his

antiquated
The PREFACE.

"antiquated Phrase and Wit, his want of Method and
Coherence, and his Deficiency in almost all the Graces
and Ornaments of this kind of Writing; yet by the
Justness of his MORAL, the Aptness of many of his
Descriptions, and the plain and natural Turn of several
of his Characters, he pleases his Audience, and often
gains their Ear, without a single Bribe from Luxury or
Vice. That Piece of his, (the Tragedy of HAMLET)
which appears to have most affected English Hearts, and
has perhaps been oftener acted of any which have come
upon our Stage, is almost one continu'd Moral: a Series
of deep Reflections, drawn from one Mouth, upon the
Subject of one single Accident and Calamity, naturally
fitted to move Horror and Compassion. It may be
properly said of this Play, if I mistake not, that it has
only ONE Character or principal Part. It contains
no Adoration or Flattery of the Sex: no ranting at
the Gods: no blustering Heroism: nor any thing of
that curious mixture of the Fierce and Tender, which
makes the hinge of modern Tragedy, and nicely va-
ries it between the Points of Love, and Honour."

I HAVE already run this Preface to a great length,
otherwise I should have taken notice of some beautiful
Passages in the Poems; but a Reader of Taste cannot
miss them.

FOR my own part, as this Revival of his Works
oblige me to look over SHAKESPEAR's Plays, I
can't but think the Pains I have taken in correcting, well
recompensed by the Pleasure I have receiv'd in reading:
And if after this, I should attempt any thing Dramatic in
his Vein and Spirit, be it owing to the Flame borrow'd
from his own Altar!

Hampstead,
Nov. 24.
1724.

AN
AN ESSAY ON THE Art, Rise, and Progress of the STAGE, 
In Greece, Rome, and England.

BEFORE I come to the Art and Rise of the Stage, I shall say a word or two of Shakspeare, the English Ornament of it, and of his Works. I confess that I have nothing to add to his Life, written by Mr. Rowe, who has perfectly exhausted that Subject; yet he has, by declining a general and full Criticism, left me room enough to discourse both of the Author's Genius and his Writings. As I shall give many more Examples of his Beauties, than those few which
An Essay on the Art, Rife,

his Editor has but slightly glanced on. in his Life; so shall I lay down such Rules of Art, as that the Reader may be able to distinguish his Errors from his Perfections, now too much and too unjustly confounded by the foolish Bigotry of his blind and partial Adorers. For there are a sort of Men, who deal by him as some of our modern Dedicators do by their Patrons; denying them all Defects, and at the same time dawning them with shining Qualities, which they do not only not possess, but have no need of, to compleat their Character: by so childish a Conduit not only bringing into question those which are really their Due, but making their Patrons as ridiculous as themselves. For an unjust or ill-grounded Praise of the Living, is no better than fulsome Flattery; and of the Dead, only a mere assuming Compliment to our selves, as Men of greater Genius, Discernment, and Penetration than others, in the Discovery of Beauties, which they are not able to find out. This is the very Fault which those Modernists lay to the Charge of the Admirers of the Antients: for while they would persuade us, that these have given Beauties to Homer, Virgil, Horace, etc. which those Poets never thought of, or design'd, they have advance'd so unreasonable a Bigotry to our Poet, that if a Man, by Art and Reason, but question the greatest and most absurd of his Faults, with the Romans of old, on the same occasion—Clamant perisse Pudorem.

'Tis my opinion, that if Shakespeare had had those Advantages of Learning, which the perfect Knowledge of the Antients would have given him; so great a Genius as his would have made him a very dangerous Rival in Fame to the greatest Poets of Antiquity: so far am I from seeing, how this Knowledge could either have curb'd, confin'd, or spoil'd the natural Excellence of his Writings. For tho I must always think our Author a Miracle, for the Age he liv'd in, yet I am oblig'd, in justice to Reason and Art, to confess that he does not come up to the Antients, in all the Beauties of the Drama; yet it is no small Honour to him, that he has surpass'd them in the Topicks or Common Places.

But to put his Errors and his Excellencies on the same bottom, is to injure the latter, and give the Enemies of
our Poet an Advantage against him, of doing the same; that is, of rejecting his Beauties, as all of a piece with his Faults. This unaccountable Bigotry of the Town to the very Errors of Shakespeare, was the Occasion of Mr. Rymer's Criticisms, and drove him as far into the contrary Extreme. I am far from approving his Manner of treating our Poet: Tho Mr. Dryden owns that all, or most of the Faults he has found, are just; yet he adds this odd Reflection: 'And yet, says he, who minds the Critick, and who admires Shakespeare less?' That was as much as to say, 'Mr. Rymer has indeed made good his Charge, and yet the Town admir'd his Errors still:' which I take to be a greater Proof of the Folly and abandon'd Taste of the Town, than of any Imperfections in the Critick. And this, in my opinion, expos'd the Ignorance of the Age he liv'd in, to which, Mr. Rowe very justly ascribes most of his Faults. It must be own'd, that Mr. Rymer carry'd the matter too far, since no Man, who has the least Relish of Poetry, can question his Genius: For, in spite of his known and visible Errors, when I read Shakespeare, even in some of his most irregular Plays, I am surpriz'd into a Pleasure so great, that my Judgment is no longer free to see the Faults, tho they are ever so gross and evident. There is such a Witchery in him, that all the Rules of Art, which he does not observe, tho built on an equally solid and infallible Reason, as entirely vanish away in the Transports of those that he does observe, as if I had never known any thing of the matter. The Pleasure, I confess, is as peculiar as strong; for it comes from the admirable Draughts of the Manners, visible in the Distinction of his Characters, and his surprizing Reflections and Topicks which are often extremely heightened by the Expression and Harmony of Numbers: for in these no Man ever excelled him, and very few ever came up to his Merit. Nor is his nice touching the Passion of Joy, the least Source of this Satisfaction; for he frequently moves this, in some of the most indifferent of his Plays, so strongly, that it is impossible to quell the Emotion. There is likewise ever a Sprightliness in his Dialogue, and often a Genteelness, especially in his Much ado about Nothing, which is very surprizing for that
An Essay on the Art, Rise,

that Age, and what the Learned BEN could not attain by all his Industry: and I confess, if we make some small allowance for a few Words and Expressions, I question whether any one has since excelled him in that particular.

Tho all these Beauties were owing chiefly to a natural Strength of Genius in him, yet I can never give up his Acquaintance with the Antients, so entirely as MR. Rowe has done; because I think there are many Arguments to prove, that he knew at least some of the Latin Poets, particularly Ovid; two of his Epistles being translated by him: his Motto to Venus and Adonis is another Proof. But that he had read Plautus himself, is plain from his Comedy of Errors, which is taken visibly from the Menachmi of that Poet; as will be evident, when we come to consider that Play. The Characters he has in his Plays drawn of the Romans, is a Proof, that he was acquainted with their Historians; and Ben himself, in his commendatory Verses before the first Folio Edition of Shakespear's Works, allows him to have a little Latin, and less Greek; that is, he would not allow him to be as perfect a Critic in the Latin, as he himself was; but yet that he was capable of reading at least the Latin Poets; as is, I think, plainly prov'd. For I can see no manner of weight in that Conjecture, which supposes that he never read the Antients, because he has not any where imitated them; so fertile a Genius as his, having no need to borrow Images from others, which had such plenty of his own. Besides, we find by experience, that some of our modern Authors, nay, those who have made great Figures in the University for their Wit and Learning, have so little follow'd the Antients in their Performances, that by them a Man could never guess that they had read a word of them; and yet they would take it amiss, not to be allow'd to be very well read both in the Latin and Greek Poets. If they do this in their Writings out of Pride, or want of Capacity; may we not as justly suppose, that Shakespear did it out of an Abundance of his own natural Stock? I contend not here to prove, that he was a perfect Master of either the Latin or Greek Authors; but all that I aim at, is to shew, that as he was capable of reading some of the Romans, so he had
had actually read Ovid and Plautus, without spoiling or
confining his Fancy or Genius.

'Whether his Ignorance of the Antients were a Dif-
advantage to him or no, may admit of a dispute.' I
am surpriz'd at the Affertion; unless Mr. Rowe means,
That all things may be argu'd upon; and that the Pro-
blems of Euclid, so long admitted as indisputable, may,
by a new fort of Scepticism, be call'd in question. The
Reason he assigns for this, is thus: 'For tho' the Know-
ledge of them might have made him more correct, yet
it is not improbable but that the Regularity and De-
ference for them, which would have attended that
Correctness, might have restrain'd some of that Fire,
Impetuosity, and even Beautiful Extravagance, which
we admire in Shakespeare.' I must own, that I am not
capable of comprehending his Proof, or indeed of find-
ing that it is any Proof at all: for if the Knowledge of
the Antients would have made him correct, it would have
given him the only Perfection he wanted; and that is
certainly an Advantage not to be disputed. But then this
'Correctness might have restrain'd some of that Fire,
Impetuosity, and even Beautiful Extravagance, &c.'
We do not find, that Correctness in Homer, Virgil, Sopho-
cles, Euripides, &c. restrain'd any Fire that was truly ce-
lestial: and why we should think, that it would have had
a worse effect on Shakespeare, I cannot imagine; nor do
I understand what is meant by Beautiful Extravagance:
For if it be something beyond Nature, it is so far from
being admir'd by Men of Sense, that it is contemn'd and
laugh'd at. For what there is in any Poem, which is out
of Nature, and contrary to Verisimilitude and Probabi-
licity, can never be beautiful, but abominable. The Busi-
ness of Poetry is to copy Nature truly, and observe Prob-
ability and Verisimilitude justly; and the Rules of Art
are to shew us what Nature is, and how to distinguish
its Lineaments from the unruly and preposterous Sallies
and Blights of an irregular and uninstructed Fancy. So
that as I think it is plain, that Shakespeare was not entirely
ignorant of the Antients; so, I believe, it is as evident,
that he wou'd have been much more, not less perfect
than he is, had his Ignorance of them been much less.
than it really was. A judicious Reader of our Author will easily discover those Defects, that his Beauties wou'd make him wish had been corrected by a Knowledge of the whole Art of the Drama. For it is evident, that by the Force of his own Judgment, or the Strength of his Imagination, he has follow'd the Rules of Art in all those Particulars in which he pleases. I know, that the Rules of Art have been sufficiently clamour'd against by an ignorant and thoughtless sort of Men of our Age; but it was because they knew nothing of them, and never considered, that without some Standard of Excellence, there cou'd be no Justice done to Merit, to which Poetasters and Poets must else have an equal Claim, which is the highest Degree of Barbarism. Nay, without an Appeal to these very Rules, Shakspeare himself is not to be distinguished from the most worthless Pretenders, who have often met with an undeserv'd Applause, and challenge'd the Title of great Poets from their Success.

Nature. Nature is the great Cry against the Rules. We must be judg'd by Nature, say they; not at all considering, that Nature is an equivocal Word, whose Sense is too various and extensive ever to be able to appeal to; since it leaves it to the Fancy and Capacity of every one, to decide what is according to Nature, and what not. Besides there may be a great many things natural, which Dramatick Poetry has nothing to do with. To do the Needs of Life, is as natural as any Action of it; but to bring such a thing into a Piece of History-Painting, or Dramatick Poetry, wou'd be monstrous and absurd, tho' natural; for there may be many things natural in their proper Places, which are not so in others. It is therefore necessary, there shou'd be Rules to let the Poet know not only what is natural, but when it is proper to be introduced, and when not. The Droll-Pieces of the Dutch are all very natural; yet I dare believe there is no Man so very ignorant of the Decorum of History-Painting, as to think, that in the Tent of Darius, by Monsieur Le Brun, or the Jephtha's Sacrifice, it wou'd be natural or proper to introduce one of those Droll-Pieces, either of drinking, dancing, snick-or-snee, or the like. For tho' both the Painters have propos'd Nature for their Copy, and have drawn
and Progress of the Stage, &c. 7
drawn her perfectly well; yet Grief and Laughter are so
very incompatible, that to join these two Copies of
Nature together, would be monstrous and shocking to
any judicious Eye. And yet this Absurdity is what is
done so commonly among us in our Tragi-Comedies;
this is what our Shakespeare himself has frequently been
guilty of, not only in those Mixtures which he has given
us of that kind, but in many other Particulars, for want
of a thorow Knowledge of the Art of the Stage.

After this, I hope no Man will affect, that Criticism is
an ill-natur'd Work, unless he will declare for all the Ex-
travagancies of Ignorance, and that Absurdities ought to
be indulg'd for the sake of a great Name. For if Truth
and Reason may be of any account, to point out the real
Errors of any Man, must be thought a good-natur'd Of-
lice; since it is to bring Men to a just Sense of things, and
a true Knowledge and Taste of Nature and Art. Did e-
ever any Man think it an ill-natur'd thing to tell a Friend
of his Mistakes in Conduct? Much less must it be thought
so in the Discoveries of the Errors of writing; because
by the Correction many are inform'd how to direct them-
selves justly, and not to follow the Ignes Fainos of a dis-
temper'd Fancy, without ever consulting Judgment; which
must make its Decision by the Rules of Art. I confess,
that there is a Decency in doing this, which to forfake, is
to become liable to this Censure, as Mr. Rymer has done:
who was not content to point out the Faults of Shakespeare,
but wou'd deny him all manner of Excellence: The like
has been done by the Remarker on Cato. This indeed
favour's of Ill-nature and Envy: but sure no body will
accuse Aristote of the same Crime, for those he discovers
in Sophocles, Euripides, and some other Greek Poets,
whose Beauties and Perfections he recommends to our
Imitation. Notwithstanding that he forms from these his
Poetics, and that they were of such great Authority and
Esteem; yet this Father of all Criticks makes no difficulty
of showing in what they transgress'd the Rules, which he
founds on Reason and Nature: which the Athenians
rightly look'd on, as a piece of Justice, not Ill-nature.
For if, as he allow'd them their Excellencies, he had not
pointed out their Defects; he had left room for a Bigotry
An Essay on the Art, Rise,
to a Name, to have made their Vices pass for Virtues, to
the prejudice of the just Improvement of so noble an Art.
Thus I shall all along recommend the Beauties of Shake-
speare; but must beg leave to lay down the Rules of the
Drama, lest we fall into an erroneous Imitation of his
Faults. The Answer of Dionysius to Pompey the Great,
will be just to all who shall be of his mind—Pompey
complain'd, that he had found fault with Plato, to which
he replies in this manner,—Your Veneration for
Plato is just, but your Accusation of me unjust. When
a Man writes to show what is good or bad in a Subject,
hel ought, with the utmost Exactness, to point out its
Virtues and Vices, because that is a certain way to
come at the Truth, which is the most valuable of all
things. Had I wrote against Plato, with a design to de-
cry his Works, I ought to have been accounted as en-
vicious as Zoilus; but on the contrary, my Design was
to praise him: yet if in doing this, I have discover'd
and improv'd any of his Errors or Defects, I have
done nothing that merits a Complaint, &c.

This, I hope, is sufficient to clear just Criticism from
the Imputation of ill-nature: and I am of opinion, that
since Poetry has always been esteem'd, in all civiliz'd and
polite Countries, a noble Art; there is a necessity to free
it from that Barbarism it has hitherto lain under in this
Nation, especially in its most valuable and useful part;
the Drama; to lay down those Rules which may form
our Judgment, and bring it to a Perfection, that it has
not yet known among us.

There is indeed a very formidable Party among us, who
are such Libertines in all manner of Poetry, especially in
the Drama, that they think all regular Principles of Art an
Imposition not to be borne; yet, while they refuse in
Poetry just Rules, as a Test of their Performance, they
will allow no Man a Master in any other, that follows not
the Rules of his Art, be it Painting, Statuary, Archi-
itecture, &c. the Precepts of Poetry are not less founded
on Nature and Reason, and must indeed be the only
Distinction betwixt an Artist and a Pretender. This false
Notion has open'd a Door to all the abominable Scrib-
ers, who have so often won a Reputation from the Igno-
rance
and Progress of the Stage, &c. 9

rance of the Town (to the Scandal of the Nation) nay; who have past for Authors of the first Rank; tho' their Writings, as Ben Johnson, in his Discoveries has it, A Man would not wrap up any wholesome Drug in, &c. For if Poetry have no certain Standard of Excellence, no fix'd Rules to go by; then it must of confquence be an arbitrary Licence of writing what extravagant thing ever one pleases; and that Mels of Madness, that is most plausibly cook'd up by the Players, and goes best down with the Mob, that is, the Ignorant of all Degrees and Stations, is the best Poetry: A Notion so very whimsical, that it was never entertain'd in any City in the Universe, but London (and perhaps Madrid) for it levels all Men, makes Settle and Dursey as good Poets as Otway and Addison: which is to deter Men of Learning and Genius from writing, since they are liable to Censures, almost as scandalous as those the Poets of Madrid are subject to; as we have the Account from The Lady's Travels into Spain: which, because it bears some Proportion to the State of our Stage, I shall transcribe.

—— The finest Comedies in the World (says he) I mean those acted in the City, very often receive their Fate from the weak Fancy of some ignorant Wretch or other. But there is one particularly, a Shoe-maker, who decides the Matter, and who has gain'd so absolute an Authority so to do, that when the Poets have made their Plays, they go to him, and as it were, sue to him for his Approbation: They read to him their Plays; and the Shoe-maker, with grave Looks thereupon, utters abundance of Nonsense; which nevertheless the poor Poet is forc'd to put up. After all, if he happens to be at the first acting of it, everybody has his Eyes upon the Behaviour and Action of this pitiful Fellow: the young People, of what Quality soever, imitate him; if he yawns, they yawn; if he laughs, so do they. In a word, sometimes he grows angry or weary, and then takes a little Whistle, and falls a whistling; at the same time you hear an hundred Whistles, which make so thrill a noife, that 'tis enough to confound the Heads of all the Spectators. By this time, our poor Poet is quite ruin'd; all his Study and Pains having been at the mer-

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An ESSAY on the Art, Rise,

cy of a Blockhead, according as he was in good or bad
Humour.

This perhaps may seem a harder Fate, than what our
Poets here are liable to: But whilst Ignorance is to be
Judge of Art, and the Direction of the Theatre is in such
Hands, it is certain, the Case is much the same. For the
Fate of a Play depends on these Gentlemen’s Opinion of
it, who have nothing to guide them but Fancy, which leads
them ten times into an Error, for once that it hits right;
and then it is by wondrous chance. Nay, it is no new
Defect of the Stage; for when the Poets, that is, the
Masters of the Art, left off ordering the Stage, and di-
recting the Actors, as the admirable Critick Monsieur Das-
cier observes, in his Notes on the last Chapter of Aristotle’s
Art of Poetry, the Players being left to themselves, imme-
diately spoil’d the acting, and degenerated from that Wis-
dom and Simplicity, by which they had been maintain’d.

These are the Gentlemen particularly, that bring their
Arguments against regular Plays, which had been as fallly
urged, before the Reformation of the French Stage; as is
plain from the Academy’s Animadversions on the Cid of
Corneille, p. 22: Let their Words justify my Assertion—
Que si au contraire, quelques Pieces regulaires donnent peu de
Satisfaction, il ne faut pas croire, que se soit la Faute des
Regles, mais bien celles des Auteurs; dont le Sterile Genie
ne pu fournir a l’Art, une que jus! asez Riches: i.e. ‘If,
on the contrary, some regular Pieces give but little Satis-
faction, you ought not to believe, that this is the fault
of the Rules, but of the Authors; whose barren Genius
cannot supply Art with what is rich and noble.’ The
Rules of Art indeed are not for any Man, to whom Na-
ture has not given a Genius; without which it is impossi-
ble to observe, or indeed perfectly to understand them.

The ingenious Michael Cervantes, the celebrated Author
of Don Quixot, tells us, that the same Objection was made
to him in Defence of irregular Plays, that had usurp’d the
Spanish Stage under the Direction of the Actors. Which
I shall transcribe, because it shows that Stage to be like
ours; that the Opinion of a Man of his Wit and Judg-
ment, may have a just Influence on those, who look
more on Authority than Reason.

In
and Progress of the Stage, &c.

In the 50th Chapter of his first Part, the Canon and the Curate are discoursing to this purpose,—If these Plays, that are now in vogue, as well those that are mere Fiction, as those that are taken out of History, are all or the greatest part of them, plain visible Fopperies, and things without head or tail; yet the Multitude delights in, and thinks them good, tho' they are so far from it.

And if the Poets who write, and the Players who act, say they must be such, because the Multitude will have them so, and no otherwise; and that those which are regular, and carry on the Plot according to Art, are only of use to a few wise Men, who understand them, and all the rest make nothing of them; and that it is better for them to get their Bread by Many, than to be look'd on by a Few—If this be so, I say, the same will be the Fate of my Book; after I have crack'd my Brain to observe the Rules I have spoken of, I shall lose my labour. And tho' I have sometimes endeavour'd to persuade the Actors, that they are in the wrong in following that Opinion; and that they would draw more People, and gain more Reputation by acting Plays, that are according to the Rules of Art, than by those Mad ones: they are so fond of their own Opinion, that there is no bearing them out of it. I remember I once said to one of these obstinate Men—Tell me, don't you remember that a few years ago, there were three Plays acted in Spain, written by a famous Poet of this Kingdom, which were so excellent, that they astonish'd, pleas'd, and surpriz'd all that saw them, as well ignorant as wise; the Multitude, as better sort? And those three alone yielded the Actors more Money than thirty of the best that have been made since. Doubtless, Sir, said the Poet I speak of, you mean the Isabella, Phillis, and Alexander? I mean the same, quoth I, and see whether those did not observe the Rules of Art; and did not please all People? So that the Fault is not in the Multitude, who require Follies; but in those, who know not how to show them any thing else. Nor was the Play of Ingratitude Revenge'd a Foppery; nor was there any in that of Numantia; nor the Amorous Merchant; much less in the Favourable She-Enemy; nor in some others, that
An ESSAT on the Art, Rise,

that have been written by judicious Poets, to their great
Reputation and Renown, and to the Advantage of those
that acted them. Much more I urg'd; which, in my
Opinion, confounded, but did not convince him, so as
to make him recede from his erroneous Conceit.

You have hit on a thing, Master Canon, (answer'd
the Curate) that has stir'd up the old Grudg I bear the
Plays now in use; which is not inferior to my Aver-
sion to Books of Knight-Errantry. For whereas the
Drama, according to Tully, ought to be a Mirror of
human Life, a Pattern of Manners, and a lively Image
of Truth; those, that are acted now-a-days, are Mirrors
of Extravagancies: Patterns of Follies; and lively
Images of Leudnefs. For what greater Extravagancies
can there be, than to bring on a Child in its Swaddling-
bands, in the first Scene of the first Act; and in the
second to have him walk in, as grown up to a stout
Man? And what greater Folly than to represent to
us a fighting old Fellow, and a cowardly young
Man; an haranguing Footman; a Page taking on him
to be a Privy-Counsellor; a King a mere Clown; a
Princess an errant Cook-Wench? What shall I say to
the Time and Place, that these Accidents may or might
have happen'd in? For I have seen a Play, whose first
Act began in Europe, the second in Asia, and the third
in Africa; and had it held out four Acts, the fourth
would have ended in America; and so it would have
been acted in all the four Quarters of the World.

And if Imitation be the principal Part of the Drama,
how is it possible that any tolerable Understanding
should be pleas'd to see, that when they are acting a
Passage, that happen'd in the Days of King Pepin, or
Charlemagne; the same Man, who acts the Hero of
the Play, should be made the Emperor Heraclius, who
carry'd the Cross to Jerusalem, in order to recover the
Holy Sepulchre, as Godfrey of Bulloin did, when there
are many years distance betwixt those Actions? Or
when the Play is grounded on Fiction, to apply it to
Truths out of History; or patch it up with Accidents,
that happen'd to several Perfons, and at several Times;
and this not with any Cointrivance, to make it appear
probable.
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probable, but with manifest Errors altogether inexcusable? And the worst of it is, there are some Blockheads who call this Perfection, and all the rest Notion and Pedantry, &c."

And after some Reflections on the monstrous Miracles, forg'd for their religious Plays, he proceeds—

—All this is an Affront to Truth, a Discredit to History, and a Shame to the Spanish Wits. Because foreigners, who are very strict in observing the Laws of the Drama, look on us as ignorant and barbarous, when they see the Absurdity, and enormous Folly of these we write. And that is not excus'd by saying, that the chief Design of well-govern'd Commonweaths, in permitting Plays to be acted, is to divert the Commonalty with some lawful Recreation, to disperse the ill Humours that Idleness often breeds; and that since this is done by any Play good or bad, there is no occasion to prescribe Laws, or confine those that write, or those that act them, to make them such as they ought to be: For, as I said, any of them serve to compass the End design'd by them. To this I would answer, that the End would be infinitely better attain'd by good Plays, than these that are not so. For a Man, after seeing a good and well-contriv'd Play, wou'd go away pleas'd with the Comedy, instruct'd by the serious Part; surpriz'd at the Plot, improv'd by the Language, warn'd by the Frauds, inform'd by the Examples, disgust'd at Vice, and in love with Virtue: for a good Play must work all these Effects upon him that sees it, tho' he be never so rude and unthinking. And it is absolutely impossible, but that a Play, that has all these Qualifications, must please, divert, satisfy, and content beyond that which wants them; as for the most part those do that are now acted. And the Poets that write them are not in the fault; for some of them are very sensible of the Errors they commit, and know what they ought to do. But Plays being become venal, they say, and are in the right on't, that the Actors wou'd give nothing for them, if they were not of that Stamp. And therefore the Poet endeavours to suit himself to what the Actor, who is to pay for it, requires, &c.

This:
This is so near an Image of our Dramatick State, in this Nation, that I hope the Observation of so receiv’d a Wit as Michael Cervantes, will have some weight with our Men of Figure, who are, or would be thought, Men of Sense and Politeness. Yet, if they should think Authority insufficient, because against their wretched God; I shall shew, that Reason is as much against them: and then shew the Source of our ill Taste, and the Corruption of our Stage, by giving a View of the Original and Rise of the Drama, in Greece, in Rome, and in this Nation.

To come therefore to Reason, against those blind Enemies to Regularity, and without which there can be no Harmony, we must prove that Poetry is an Art.

As the Injustice of Men was the Cause of Laws, so the Decay of Arts, and the Faults committed in them (as Dacier observes) oblig’d Men first to make Rules, and afterwards to revive them. The Laws of Legislators place all their Reason in their Will, or the present Occurrences; but the Rules of Poetry advance nothing but what is accompany’d with Reason, and drawn from the common Sentiments of Mankind: so that Men themselves become the Rule and Measure of what these prescribe.

All Arts are certain Rules or Means of arriving at, or doing something that is good and beneficial to Mankind; now Poetry aiming at the Instruction of Men by Pleasure, it proposes a certain End for the Good of Men: it must therefore have certain Rules or Means of obtaining that End; and is therefore an Art.

Poetry is not only an Art, but its Rules are known, and it is impossible to succeed without them. The certain Consequence of this is, that the Rules and what pleased are never contrary to each other, and that you can never obtain the latter without the former. Secondly, That Poetry being an Art, can never be prejudicial to Mankind: for when any Verses are so, they deviate from the Rules, and are no longer Poetry, which was invented and improv’d for their advantage only. Poetry owes its Rise to Religion: Hymns in the praise of, and Thanksgiving to Heaven for Blessings receiv’d, was the original Poetry; for Men, naturally inclin’d to Imitation,
and Progress of the Stage, &c. 15

tation, employ'd their native Tendence to Musick and Song, to the Praises of their Gods: And had Man con-
tinu'd in his primitive Simplicity, Hymns and Divine Songs, as among the Hebrews, had been all our Poetry.
But in the Heathen System, Men soon deviated from this Purity; admitting first the Praise of Men, and then Sa
rire, or Raillery on one another at their drunken Meetings, at Harvest-home, or the like. Thus Poetry
being corrupted soon, scarce retain'd any Footsteps of Religion, whence it first sprung.

The succeeding Poets, being the Divines and Philoso-
phers of those times, observing the invincible Bent of the People to these Feasts and Shows, and that it would
be a fruitless Labour and Endeavour to restore their pri-
mitive Simplicity; took an admirable and wise care to
turn this Inclination of theirs to Pleasure, to their advan-
tage; by making that Pleasure convey Instruction to them, in so agreeable a manner.

To pass over the various Changes of Poetry, we must
remember that we owe to Homer the Epick Poem; and
in that the Origin of Tragedy, more excellent for the
Regulation of the Passions than the Epopee, which only
reach'd to Customs. The Invention of Comedy some
attribute to the Corruption and degenerate Luxury of
the People, some to the Margites of Homer; but both these
Opinions are easily reconcil'd: for the Opprobria Rustica,
as Horace calls them, the lewd Railleries of the Coun-
try-People at their drunken rural Festivals, gave the
Ground-work, which the Margites of Homer reduc'd in-
to a more decent Form and Order, and gave the Idea,
whence after Poets deriv'd the antient Comedy.

But hence it is plain, as I have said, that Poesie is an
Art, because we see from its Rife it has propos'd a cer-
tain End, and must necessarily have certain Means to be
conducted to that End. For where there is a Right and
a Wrong, there must be some Art or Rules to avoid the
one, and arrive at the other. But then perhaps it may
still be question'd, whether these Rules are fix'd and
known, and whether they are those prescrib'd by Ari-
سطele? That they are known, will be plain from what
follows; and that they are those of Aristotle, at least in
the
the Drama (which I shall chiefly insist on in this Essay) will be as plain, if we consider, 1st, Who gives the Rules: 2dly, When he gave them; and, 3dly, The Manner in which he gave them. Aristotle's Character for Knowledge in all the polite Arts, will be of some force; for his Genius and Capacity are sufficiently known to the Learned. 2dly, The Age he liv'd in, was in almost the first Regulation, if not Rise of Tragedy; learning the Art with Sophocles and Euripides, who brought it to Perfection, and seeing the effect it had on the most polite and knowing People of the World. 3dly, The Manner in which they are deliver'd, is so evident and conformable to Nature, as that I cannot but be sensible of their truth. To confirm this, I consider the effects they have had in all Nations where they were known; for all the Beauties of Homer, Sophocles, Euripides, and the other Greek Poets of any note, are perfectly conformable to them; and these being five hundred years after reviv'd, in the time of Augustus, at Rome, we find the Beauties of Virgil and the Latins owing to them. Nay, two thousand years after they were written, we observe that by them the best Tragedies of France and Spain, nay, I may say of England too, are those in which they are perfectly follow'd: in which all that pleaseth, is according to the Rules; and all that disgusts, or is insipid, wild, or extravagant, contrary to them: for good Sense and right Reason are of all Countries. Human Laws indeed which regard the State, alter according to the Circumstances and Interests of the Men for which they were made: but these are always the same, and ever support their Vigour, because they are the Law of Nature, which always acts uniformly, revives them continually, and gives them a perpetual Existence.

From hence it follows, that these Rules are known, and that they are those deliver'd by Aristotle, and that they are never opposite to what pleaseth; since they were made to shew us the Path we ought to tread, that we may arrive at what pleaseth. Were the Rules and what pleaseth opposite, we could never please but by chance; which is absurd. As there are certain Rules, therefore, that teach us to please, so we ought to make it our business to study and learn them,
and Progress of the Stage, &c. 17

them, both for the reading and judging part: for these Rules are drawn from the Pleasant and the Profitable, and lead us to their Source. The Pleasant and the Profitable are what naturally please; and that, in all Arts, is what we always consult. In this most perfect and sure Model of Imitation, we find perfect Unity and Order; for it is in itself the Effect of Order, and the Rule to conduct us to it: while there is only one way to find Order, but many to fall into Confusion.

There would be nothing bad (says Dacier very justly) in the World, if all that pleased were good; for there's nothing so absurd, but will have some Admirers. You may say indeed, that it is not true that what is Good pleases, because we daily see Disputes about the Good and the Pleasant; that the same thing pleases some, and displeases others; nay, it pleases and displeases the very same Man at different times. From whence then proceeds this difference? It comes either from an absolute Ignorance of the Rule, or that the Passions alter it. Rightly to clear this Truth, I believe, I may lay down this Maxim, That all Sensible Objects are of two sorts; some may be judged of by the Sense independently of Reason (I call Sense that Impression which the animal Spirits make on the Soul) and others can't be judged of but by Reason exercise'd in Science. Things simply agreeable or disagreeable, are of the first sort; all the World may judge alike of these. For example, the most Ignorant in Musick perceives very well when a Player on the Lute strikes one String for another, because he judges by his Sense, and his Sense is the Rule. On such occasions we may, therefore, very well say, That all that pleases is good; because that which is good does please, or that which is ill never fails to displease: for neither Passion nor Ignorance dull the Sensés, but sharpen them. It is not thus in things that spring from Reason: Passion and Ignorance work very strongly in them, and choke the Judgment; and for this cause we ordinarily judge so ill, and differently in those things of which Reason is the Rule and the Cause. Why what is bad often pleases, and that which is good does not always do so, is not the
fault of the Object, but of the Judge: but what is good
will infallibly please those who can judge, and that's
sufficient. By this we may see, that a Play, that shall
bring those things which are to be judged by Reason
within the Rules, and also that which is to be judged
by Sense, shall never fail to please both the Learned
and the Ignorant. Now this Conformity of Suffrages
is the most sure, or, according to Aristotle, the only
mark of the Good and Pleasant. But these Suffrages
are not to be obtained but by the observing of the
Rules, and consequently these Rules are the only cause
of the Good and the Pleasant; whether they are fol-
low'd methodically and with design, or only by haz-
ard or chance. For 'tis certain, there are many Per-
sons who are entirely ignorant of these Rules, and yet
do not miss of Success in many things. But this is far
from destroying the Rules, since it only serves to shew
their Beauty, and proves how far they are conformable
to Nature, since those often follow them, who know
nothing of them.

The latter end of this is perfectly prov'd by our Shake-
speare, who in all that pleases is exactly conformable to
the Rules, tho' 'tis evident by his Defects, that he knew
nothing of them. I hope this is enough to satisfy any
reasonable Man, not only that as Poesy is an Art, it pro-
poses certain Means to arrive at a certain End; but that
these Rules are absolutely necessary for the judging and
writing justly. If any one desire to see this Argument
handled more at large, it will be worth his while to read
Monseur Dacier's admirable Preface to his Remarks on
the Poeticks of Aristotle; from which, what I have said
on this head is but an Abridgment.

Since therefore the Necessity of Rules is thus evident,
I think I cannot be more just to the Art, and to those
Poets who may hereafter arise worthy the Name, than to lay down in as few words as possible the Rules of the
Drama: to which I shall subjoin some relating to the
Epigram, under which last Head most of the Miscellanies
of Shakespeare will fall; that by this means the ingenious
Reader may distinguish betwixt his Errors and Beauties,
and so fix his Praise on a jufter ground, than the blind
Caprice
Caprice of every ignorant Fancy. And if by this he
will not appear so praiseworthy in many things, as he
may now be thought, yet his Praise will be greater and
more valuable when it is founded on Reason and Truth,
and the Judgment of Men of Sense and Understanding.

Before I come to the particular Rules of the Stage, as
Aristotle has laid them down, I shall set down what an
English Nobleman has given us on this Subject in Verse;
because there are some things relating especially to the
Diction, which Aristotle has not meddled with; and
others, which tho conformable to him, yet being in
Verse, sink easier into the Memory, and will lead the
Reader better to the Apprehension and retaining the
particular Rules in Prose, and perhaps give him a better
relish of them. For when by Pleasure we are first let
into the View of Truth, it has such charms, as to engage
our Pursuit after it thro' ways not altogether so smooth
and delightful. The Verses I take out of the Essay on
Poetry written by the late Duke of Buckingham, at a time
when the Town run away with as strange Monsters as
have pleas'd since; tho' those were dress'd a little more
gayly, and went by their Chime a little more glibly off
the Tongue.

On then, my Muse, advent'rously engage
To give Instructions that concern the Stage.
The Unities of Action, Time, and Place,
Which if observ'd give Plays so great a Grace,
Are, tho but little practis'd too well known
To be taught here, where we pretend alone
From nicer Faults to purge the present Age,
Lest obvious Errors of the English Stage.

First then Soliloquies had need be few,
Extremely short, and spoke in Passion too.
Our Lovers talking to themselves, for want
Of others, make the Pit their Confident.
Nor is the matter mended yet, if thus
They trust a Friend, only to tell it us:
Th' Occasion should as naturally fall,
As when * Bellario confesses all.

[In Philaster.]

Figures
Figures of Speech, which Poets think so fine,
Art's needles Varín to make Nature shine,
Are all but Paint upon a beauteous Face,
And in Descriptions only can have place.
But to make Rage declaim, and Grief discourse
From Lovers in Despair fine things to force,
Must needs succeed : for who can chuse but pity
A dying Hero miserably witty?
But O! the Dialogue, where Jest and Mock
Are held up like a Rest at shuttle-cock!
Or else like Bells eternally they chime,
They sigh in Simile, and die in Rhime.
What Things are these, who would be Poets thought?
By Nature not inspir'd, nor Learning taught?
Some Wit they have, and therefore may deserve
A better Course, than this by which they starve.
But to write Plays! Why 'tis a bold Pretence
To Judgment, Breeding, Wit and Eloquence;
Nay more, for they must look within, to find
These secret Turns of Nature in the Mind.
Without this Part, in vain would be the Whole
And but a Body all, without a Soul.
All this together yet is but a Part
Of * Dialogue, that great and powerful Art
Now almost lost, which the old Grecians knew,
From which the Romans fainter Copies drew,
Scarce comprehended since, but by a few.
Plato and Lucian are the best Remains
Of all the wonders which this Art contains:
Yet to our selves we must some Justice do,
Shakespeare and Fletcher are our Wonders now.

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* His Grace here refers to comedy, as the Instances of Plato and Lucian show; for the Art of Tragick Dialogue is to express the Sentiments naturally in proper Words: else his Grace had mistaken; for certainly in the Tragick Dialogue, Sophocles and Euripides, nay, even Aeschylus, must have been prefer'd. Nay, it will not hold of Tragedy; for Fletcher's Dialogue is intolerable in that, and could not be otherwise, because he seldom draws either his Manners or Sentiments from Nature.
Consider them, and read them o'er and o'er,
Go see them play'd, then read them as before:
For tho' in many things they often fail,
Over our Passions still they so prevail,
That our own Grief by theirs is rock'd asleep,
The Dull are forc'd to feel, the Wise to weep.
Their Beauties imitate, avoid their Faults.
† First on a Plot employ thy careful Thoughts;
Turn it with Time a thousand several ways,
This off alone has given Success to Plays.
Reject that vulgar Error, which appears
So fair, of making perfect Characters;
There's no such thing in nature, and you'll draw
A faultless Monster, which the World ne'er saw.
|| Some Faults must be, that his Misfortunes drew,
But such as may deserve Compassion too.
Beside the main design compos'd with Art,
* Each moving Scene must be a Plot apart.
Contrive each little Turn, mark every Place,
As Painters first chalk out the future Face.
Yet be not fondly your own Slave for this,
But change hereafter what appears amiss.
Think not so much where shining Thoughts to place,
As what a Man should say in such a case.
Neither in Comedy will this suffice,
The Player too must be before your eyes:
And tho' tis Drudgery to stoop so low,
To him you must your utmost Meaning show.
Expose no single Fop, but lay the Load
More equally, and spread the Folly broad.
The other way is vulgar; oft we see
A Fool derided by as bad as he.
Hawks fly at nobler Game; in this low way
A very Owl may prove a Bird of Prey.

† Exactly conformation to Aristotle.
I Involuntary Faults, that is, the effects of violent Passions, not
such as are voluntary and scandalous: as will appear in our Rules.
* His Grace means not, that the Scenes should not be a Part of
the Plot; but that the Poet should, besides the main Design, con-
sider well the working up of every particular Scene which is just.
ill Poets so will one poor Fop devour:

But to collect, like Bees, from every flower,

Ingredients to compose that precious Juice,

Which serves the World for Pleasure, and for Use;

In spite of Faction this would Favour get:

But Falstaff seems inimitable yet, &c.

In what I have to say of the Rules, I shall confine my self to them, without going into the Controversy; yet I shall sometimes add the Reason and Foundation, that being the Extremity my Bounds will admit.

To begin therefore with the Definition of Tragedy (for the Rules of that I shall first insist on, much of Comedy depending on them) it is this—Tragedy is the Imitation of one grave and entire Action of a just Length;

and which, without the assistance of Narration, by the

means of Terror and Compassion, perfectly refines in us all sorts of Passions, and whatever is like them.

This is explain'd by a Piece of History-Painting (which is very near a-kin to Tragedy) for the Painter takes one grave and entire Action, and mingles nothing else with it. For example, Raphael painted the Battel of Constantine,

but he brought not into that one Action of Constantine all that he had done in his Life; for that had been monstrous, and contrary to Nature and Art. Thus a Tragedy is the Imitation of some one grave Action, but not all the Actions of a Man's Life.

From hence it is plain, that there is no place in Tragedy for any thing but grave and serious Actions. Comedy imitates the witty, and the pleasent, and the ridiculous Actions of Mankind. Next, this Action must be entire; that is, it must have a Beginning, Middle, and End, and be of a just Length: not so long as that of the Epopee, nor so short as a single Fable. The excluding Narration, and the confining its Aim to Terror and Compassion, distinguishes it from the Epick Poem, which may be perfect without them, and employs Admiration.

By the refining the passions, I mean not their Extermination, which is impossible; but the reducing them to just Bounds and Moderation, which renders them as useful as they are necessary: for by representing to us the Miseries of
of those who have yielded too much to them, it teaches us to have a stricter guard over them; and by beholding the great Misfortunes of others, it lessens those that we either do or may feel ourselves.

This Imitation mention'd in the Definition being made by the Actors, or Persons representing, the Scenes are to be regarded by the Poet: For the Decoration is not only for Pomp and Show, as it is generally design'd, but to express the Nature of the things represented, and the Place; where; since there is no Action that does not suppose a Place, and Actors dress'd in one Habit or other proper to that Place.

As Tragedy is the Imitation of an Action, not Inclinations or Habits; so there is no Action, that does not proceed from the Manners and the Sentiments: therefore the Manners and Sentiments are essential Parts of Tragedy. For nothing but the Manners and Sentiments can distinguish and characterize an Action: the Manners form, and the Sentiments explain it, exposing its Causes and Motives; and those being the producers of Actions, are the Causes of Good and Evil to Mankind.

The Imitation of an Action is properly call'd the Fable; that is, the Composition of all the Parts and Incidents of this Action is the Fable. The Manners distinguish the Qualities of the Persons represented; that is, characterize Men, denote their Inclinations either good or bad. The Manners of Achilles were Choler and Temerity; those of Aeneas sweet Temper and Piety. The Sentiments are the Discourses or Speeches of the Dramatick Persons, discovering their Thoughts, and making known their Actions: by which they speak agreeably to their Manners or Characters, that the Auditors may know their Manners before they see their Actions.

There is no Subject of a Tragedy where these following five Parts are not found, viz. The Fable, the Manners, the Sentiments, the Dictation, and the Decoration. Aristotle adds the Musick, because the Greek Poets directed that too. But the chief and most considerable is the Fable, or the Composition of the Incidents, which form the Subject of the Tragedy; both in the opinion of Aristotle, and of all those who know any thing of the Reason of Things. For Tragedy
Tragedy is in imitation of an Action, not of Men; whence it follows, that Action constitutes the Tragedy, and that there can be no Tragedy where there is no Action. The good or evil Fortune of Men depends on their Actions, and the End that every Man propsoes to himself, is an Action, not a Quality: what Qualities Men pursue, are only as Mediums to some Action. Thus the general End that Mankind propose, is to live happily; but to live happily, is an Action, not a Quality. Man being therefore happy or miserable by his Actions, not Manners or Qualities; Tragedy proposes not to imitate the Manners, but adds them for the Production of Actions. So that the Fable (which is the Imitation of the Action) being the End of Tragedy, it must be of the most importance, and chiefly to be consider'd; for so the End in all things is. Another Proof, which Aristotle brings for the Preference of the Fable to all the other Parts of the Play, is, That the best and most taking Tragedies (of his Time) are those which have their Peripeties, Revolutions, or Changes of Fortune and Discoveries, as in the Oedipus of Sophocles: But these Discoveries are inseparable from the Subject, and consist entirely in Action. The Fable therefore furnishing the most efficacious Means of arriving at the End, must necessarily in Reason be the most important part of Tragedy.

Aristotle indeed, and his best Commentators, are very large on this Head, to prove that all the fine Diction, the Manners well express'd, and the Sentiments natural and just, are of no manner of value, if the Fable be faulty, or the Action maim'd. This is, I suppose, sufficient to let the Reader see, that this is not only the first thing that comes under our Consideration, as some would without any ground in Reason insinuate; but the most noble and most important thing that he is to study, if he would ever hope to deserve the Name of a Tragick Poet: to which indeed we have very few of those, who have made a considerable noise in the World for a little time, who have any Pretence. Besides, it is much easier to succeed in the Stile, or what the leading Fools call fine Diction (which is deriv'd, by the way, from Grammar and Rhetorick, not Poetry) than the forming of the Subject or Fable.
Fable justly, and with Art. Nature enabled Shakespeare to succeed in the Manners and Diction often to perfection; but he could never, by his Force of Genius or Nature, vanquish the barbarous Mode of the Times, and come to any Excellence in the Fable; except in the Merry Wives of Windsor, and the Tempest.

Next to the Fable, the Manners are the most considerable (and in these Shakespeare has generally excell'd, as will be seen when we come to his Plays,) for as Tragedy is the Imitation of an Action, so there are no Actions without the Manners, since the Manners are the Cause of Actions. By the Manners we discover the Inclinations of the Speaker, what Part, Side, or Course he will take on any important and difficult Emergence; and know how he will behave himself, before we see his Actions. Thus we know from the Manners of Achilles, what Answer he will give the Ambassadors of Agamemnon, by what the Poet has told us of his Hero. And when Mercury brings Jove's Orders to Aeneas, we know that the Piety of the Hero will prevail over his Love. And the Character of Oedipus makes us expect his extravagant Passions, and the Excesses he will commit by his Obstinacy. Those Discourses therefore that do not do this, are without the Manners. The Character of Coriolanus, in Shakespeare, prepares us to expect the Resolution he will take to disoblige the People; for Pride naturally contemns Inferiors, and over-values it self. The same may be said of Tybalt, in Romeo and Juliet; and most of the Characters of this Poet.

The Sentiments are the next in degree of Excellence to the Fable and the Manners, and justly demand the third place in our Care and Study; for those are for the Manners, as the Manners for the Subject or Fable. The Action can't be justly imitated without the Manners, nor the Manners express'd without the Sentiments. In these we must regard Truth and Verisimilitude; as when the Poet makes a Madman speak exactly as a Madman does, or as 'tis probable he would do. This Shakespeare has admirably perform'd in the Madness of King Lear; where the Cause of his Frenzy is ever uppermost, and mingles with all he says or does. But Beaumont and Fletcher have
have perform'd abominably in their Mad-House in the *Pilgrim*, and our modern Alterer of that *Play* has increas'd the Absurdities.

The *Diction*, or Language, obtains but the fourth place of the essential Parts of a Tragedy, and is of the least importance of any of them, in the Opinion of *Aristotle*, the best of Criticks, and Reason: tho' our modern Poetasters, or vile Pretenders to this noble *Poem*, have plac'd their chief Excellence in it. But the reason of it is, because this was what they thought they could in some measure obtain, while the rest were entirely above their Reach and Capacity. For the *Subject* may be well conducted, the *Manners* well mark'd, and the *Sentiments* fine, tho' ill exprest'd. It is indeed, as *Dryden* observes, the first Beauty that strikes the Ear, and enhances the Value of the Piece, but comes not into competition with any of the other three.

The *Decoration* I have already mention'd, and how far that is to be regarded by the Poet.

Having thus seen the several Parts of Tragedy, and their Excellence in regard of each other, I come to give the Directions necessary for the making each of 'em perfect.

The first and chief of them I have prov'd to be the *Fable* or *Subject*; or, as we generally call it in *English*, the *Plot*. I shall begin with that, in the forming of which, the Poet's principal Care ought to be employ'd.

Every *Action* that is fit for a Tragick Imitation, or that can be made use of in Tragedy, ought not only to be entire, but of a just length; that is, it must have a *Beginning*, *Middle*, and *End*. This distinguishes it from momentaneous *Actions*, or those that happen in an instant, without *Preparation* or *Sequel*; which wanting *Extension*, may come into the *Incidents*, not the *Fable*. *The Cause* or *Design* of undertaking an *Action*, is the *Beginning*; and the *Effects* of that *Cause*, and the *Difficulties* we find in the *Execution*, are the *Middle*; the unravelling and dissolving these *Difficulties*, is the *End*.

*The Anger of Achilles* is the *Action* propos'd by *Homer* in the two first Verses of the *Ilias*. *The Quarrel* betwixt him and *Agamemnon* is the *Beginning*; the *Evils* this *Quarrel*
Quarrel produc'd, are the Middle; and the Death of Hector, giving perfect Satisfaction to Achilles, leads to the unravelling the Action, and disposing Achilles to relent at the Tears and Prayers of Priam, and restores him to his first Tranquillity, which is the End. The Departure of Ulysses from Troy, begins the Action of the Odyssey; the Hardships and Obstacles of his Voyage make the Middle; and his Arrival and Establishment in Ithaca the End.

The true Beginning to an Action, is that which does not necessarily require or suppose any thing before it, as part of that Action. Thus the Beginning of an Epick or Dramatick Poem may be the Sequel of another Action: for the Quarrel of Agamemnon and Achilles, which is the Beginning of the Action of the Ilias, is Agamemnon's Injustice, which provok'd the Anger of Achilles, when all was quiet before in the Camp; so we may consider this Affair the Sequel of, but not depending necessarily on any thing precedent, tho' it come not to pass without it, and requires something else to follow it, depending on it, present or remote. The Retreat of Achilles to the Ships, the Trojans routing the Greeks on that Retreat, were the present Effects of his Anger; the remote, the Death of Patroclus, Reconciliation of Agamemnon and Achilles, and the Death of Hector, which satisfies and restores Tranquillity by the Tears of Priam. The End is just opposite to the Beginning; for it necessarily supposes something to have gone before, but nothing to follow it: as the End of the Anger of Achilles naturally supposes a Beginning of it, but nothing to come after. The Tranquillity of Achilles is restor'd by the Death of Hector, for then the Action is compleat; and to add any thing farther, would be to begin a new Action.

To instance in a Dramatick as well as Epick Action, tho' they perfectly agree in this, let us consider the Action of the Antigone of Sophocles. The Beginning of this Action has no necessary Dependence on the Death of her Brother Polyntices; for tho' as to that, the Decree of Creon might have been or not have been, yet it follow'd that Death, nor could it have happen'd without it. The Action begins with the impious and partial Decree of Creon...
An Essay on the Art, Rise, against the burying the Body of Polyneices; the Middle is the Effects produc'd by that Decree in Antigone's Punishment, the Death of Aëmon and Euridice; which produce the End, in breaking the Obstinance of Creon, and making him penitent and miserable.

The Middle is that which necessarily supposes something gone before, and something to follow: Thus all the Evils that the Anger of Achilles produc'd, necessarily suppose that Anger as their Cause and Beginning, from whence they did proceed. So these Evils, that is, the Middle producing the Satisfaction and Revenge of Achilles in the Death of Hector, furnish'd the End, in his relenting at the Misery of Priam. This is a perfect Example of an Epick and Dramatick Action, and shews, that the Poet cannot begin or end it where he pleases, if he would manage his Subject with true Oeconomy and Beauty. For there must be the Cause or Beginning; the Effect of that Cause, which is naturally the Middle; and the unravelling or finishing it, which is the End produc'd by the Middle, as that by the Beginning.

I have been the larger upon this Head, because so much Beauty depends upon it, and it is a Doctrine not so common, but that it needs a thorow Explication.

The Subject of the Drama should be of a just Extent, neither too narrow, nor too large; but that it may be seen, view'd and consider'd at once, without confounding the Mind, which if too little and narrow, it will do, or make it wander, or distract it; as it will do, if it be too large and extensive. That is, the Piece ought to take up just so much time, as is necessary or probable for the introducing the Incidents with their just Preparation. For to make a good Tragedy, that is, a just Imitation, the Action imitated ought not in reality to be longer than the Representation; for by that means it has the more Likeness, and by consequence is the more perfect: but as there are Actions of ten or twelve Hours, and their Representations cannot possibly be so long; then must we bring in some of the Incidents in the Intervals of the Acts, the better to deceive the Audience, who cannot be impos'd on with such tedious and long Actions as we have generally on the Stage; as whole Lives, and many Actions
and Progress of the Stage, &c. 29

Actions of the same Man, where the Probable is lost as well as the Necessary: and in this our Shakespeare is everywhere faulty, thro' the ignorant Mode of the Age in which he liv'd; and which I instance not as a Reproach to his Memory, but only to warn the Reader or young Poet to avoid the same Error.

Having shewn what an Action is, we now come more closely to the Subject; and first to the Unity of the Action, which can never be broken without destroying the Poem. This Unity is not preserv'd by the Representation of several Actions of one Man; as of Julius Cæsar, or Anthony and Brutus. Thus in the Cæsar of Shakespeare, there is not only the Action of Cæsar's Death, where the Play ought to have ended, but many other subsequent Actions of Anthony and Brutus, even to the Overthrow and Death of Brutus and Cassius; and the Poet might as well have carry'd it down to the settling of the Empire in Augustus, or indeed to the Fall of the Roman Empire in Augustulus. For there was no more reason for the ending it where he does, than at the Establishment of Augustus. Natural Reason indeed shou'd to Shakespeare the Absurdity of making the Representation longer than the Time, and the Place more extensive than the Place of acting; as is plain from his Chorus's in his Historical Plays, in which he apologizes for the Absurdity: as in the beginning of the fourth Act of the Winter's Tale, among other things, Time the Chorus says;

---Your Patience this allowing, I turn my Glass, and give my Scene such growing, As you had slept between, &c.

And the second Act of Henry V. begins another Chorus, excusing the Variation of the Place:

Thus with imagin'd Wings our first Scene flies In Motion of no less Celerity Than that of Thought. Suppose that you have seen The well-appointed King at Dover-Peer, &c.
An ESSAY on the Art, Rise,

And so goes on to describe all his Passage, &c. introducing a Narration to supply the Gap of the Action, or rather, of the Actions.

But the Chorus of the fifth Act is plainer on this Head:

Vouchsafe to those, that have not read the Story,
That I may prompt them, and of such as have,
I humbly pray them to admit th' Excuse
Of TIME, of Numbers, and true Course of things,
Which cannot in their huge and proper Life
Be here presented, &c.

In Pericles Prince of Tyre, the Chorus's excuse the rambling from place to place, and the like: But 'tis pity that his Discovery of the Absurdity did not bring him to avoid it, rather than make an Apology for it. But this is not the only Fault of the way of writing in his time, which he did not correct; for in the Chorus of the third Act of Henry V., he concludes in this manner:

And so our Scene must to the Battel fly;
Where, O! for pity, we shall much disgrace
With four or five most vile and ragged Foils
(Right ill dispos'd, in Brawl ridiculous)
The Name of Agincourt: Yet sit and see;
Minding true things by what their Mock'ries be.

Hence it is plain, that Shakespeare's good Sense perceiv'd the ridiculous Absurdity of our fighting Scenes, our Drum and Trumpeting Scenes, but he chose to go on in the way that he found beaten to his hands, because he unhappily knew no better road.

But to return from this short Digression——This Unity of Action does not exclude the Episodes or various Under-Actions, which are dependent on, and contribute to the chief, and which without it are nothing. Thus a Painter represents in a Battel-Piece the Actions of every Particular that makes up the Army; but all these compose that main Action of the Battel. But this does not excuse the faulty Episodes or Under-plots (as they call them) of our English Plays, which are distinct Actions, and contribute nothing at all to the principal. Of this kind is Creon and Euri-
and Progress of the Stage, &c. 31
dice, and Adrastus in our lamentable Oedipus. But indeed we have few Plays free from this Absurdity; of which the Orphan is one, where the Action is one, and every Episode, Part, or Under-Action, carries on and contributes to the main Action or Subject.

Thus the different Actions of different Men are not more distinctly different Actions, than those of one Man at different times. And we might as well make a Unity of all the Actions in the World, as of those of one Man. No Action of the same Man can be brought into a Tragedy, but that which necessarily or probably relates to that Action, which the Tragedy imitates. The Wound of Ulysses, which he receiv'd in Parnassus, was necessary to his Discovery; but his Madness to avoid the War, was not: and therefore Homer takes notice of the former, but not of the latter. For as in all other Imitations, so in Tragedy, the thing imitated must be but one. This Action with its Episodes or Under-Actions, ought to be so link'd together, that to take any part away, or to endeavour to transplant them, destroys the whole: for these Episodes or Under-Actions ought either necessarily or probably to be produc'd by the main Action, as the Death of Patroclus by the Anger of Achilles. For whatever can be put in or left out, without causing a sensible Change, can never be part of the Action. This is a sure Rule to distinguish the true Episodes from the false: And this Rule will indeed condemn most of our English Tragedies, in some of which the very principal Character may be left out, and the Play never the worse. But more of that hereafter.

From what has been said of the Actions main and episodic, it is plain that the Poet is not oblig'd to relate things just as they happen, but as they might, or ought to have happen'd: that is, the Action ought to be general and allegorical, not particular; for particular Actions can have no general Influence. Thus Homer, in the Action of Achilles, intends not the Description of that one individual Man, but to show what Violence and Anger would make all Men of that Character say or do: As therefore Achilles is a general and allegorical Person, so ought all Heroes of Tragedy to be; where they should speak
An ESSAY on the Art, Rise,
speak and act necessarily or probably, as all Men so qua-
lify'd, and in those Circumstances would do: differing
from History in this, that the Drama consults not the
Truth of what any particular Person did say or do, but
only the general Nature of such Qualities to produce such
Words and Actions. 'Tis true that Tragedy employs
true Names, but that is to give a Credibility to the Act-
on; the Persons still remaining general and allegoric.
I would therefore recommend to the Poet the entire In-
vention of his own Fable; there being very few Actions
in History, that are capable of being made general and
allegoric, which is the Beauty and Essential of both an
Epick and Dramatic Action: not but the Poet may take
Incidents from History and Matter of Fact; but then
they must have that Probability and Verisimilitude that
Art requires.

But all these Properties of the Action, which we have
given, are not sufficient; for the Action, that is to be imi-
tated in Tragedy, must also be such as excites Terror and
Compassion, and not Admiration, which is a Passion too
weak to have the Effect of Tragedy. Terror and Pity are
rais'd by Surprize, when Events are produc'd out of Cau-
ses contrary to our Expectation; that is, when the Inci-
dents produce each other, not merely follow after each
other: for if it do not necessarily follow, 'tis no Incident
for Tragedy. The Surprize must be the Effect of Design,
not Chance, of precedent Incidents; allowing still, that
there are Accidents that are by Chance, which yet seem
done by Design, as the Fall of the Statue of Mitys on
his Murderer, which kill'd him, for that Accident looks
like the Work of Providence. Those Fables, where this
is observ'd, will always appear the finest. Thus Oedipus
is the best Subject for Tragedy that ever was; for all that
happen'd to him is the Effect of Fortune: yet every body
may see, that all the Accidents have their Causes, and
fall out according to the Design of a particular Prov-
dence.

As the Actions imitated by Tragedy, so are all its Fables
Simple or Implex. The Simple is that, in which there is
neither Change of the Condition or State of the principal
Person or Persons, which is call'd the Peripetie, or Disco-
very;
and Progress of the Stage, &c. 33

very; and the unravelling the Plot is only a single Passage of Agitation or Trouble, or Repose and Tranquillity, as in the Medea and Hecuba of Euripides, and the Philocetes and Ajax of Sophocles; the same is the Fable of the Iliad, and that of the Æneis. The Impex Fable is that, which has a Peripetie, or a Discovery, or both; which is the most beautiful, and the least common. In the Antigone of Sophocles, there is the Change of the State and Fortune of Creon, and that produc'd by the Effect of his own barbarous Decree and Obstinacy. But in his Oedipus and Elektra there is both a Peripetie and Discovery; the first to Misery, the latter to Revenge and Happiness. Oedipus, with his Change of Fortune, discovers, that he is the Son of Jocasta and Laius, and so guilty of Incest and Parricide. Elektra discovers Orestes to be her Brother, and changes her Miseries into Happiness, in the Revenge of her Father's Death. In the Iphigenia in Tauris, Iphigenia making a Discovery that Orestes is her Brother, changes both their Fortunes from Despair to a happy Escape from the barbarous Altars of Taurica. But the Peripetie can neither be necessary nor probable (without which Qualities they are good for nothing) if they are not the natural Result, or at least the Effect of the previous Actions, or the Subject itself. The Oedipus and Elektra of Sophocles are the most excellent in this kind, and ought to be thorougly studied by the Poets, who would excel in their Art.

But not to give you Terms without a thorow Explanation; a Peripetie is a Change of one Fortune into another, either from Good to Bad, or from Bad to Good; contrary to our Expectations; and this Change (as I have observ'd) ought to happen either necessarily or probably; as in the Oedipus of Sophocles: for he who comes to bring him agreeable News, which ought to deliver him from those Apprehensions, into which his fear of committing Incest with his Mother had thrown him, does quite the contrary, in making it out to him who and what he is. The Matter lies thus——A Messenger from Corinth brings Oedipus word of the Death of Polybus, and invites him to go and take possession of that Kingdom: but Oedipus, afraid to commit the Incest the Oracle had told him of, believing

C 5

Polybus.
Polybus his Father, declar'd, that he never would go to the Place where his Mother was. The Corinthian told him that he did not know himself, disturbing his Head about nothing; and thinking to do him a signal Piece of Service, in delivering him from his Fears, informs him, that Polybus and Merope were not his Father and Mother; which began the Discovery, that cast him into the most horrible of all his Misfortunes.

But because Discovery is here a Dramatick Term, and so signifies something more than in its vulgar Acceptation, I must inform the Reader, that here it means a Discovery, which is made by the principal Characters on remembering either one another, or something of Importance to their Change of Fortune, and is thus defin'd by Aristotle— The Discovery is a Change, which causing us to pass from Ignorance to Knowledge, produces either Love or Hatred in those whom the Poet has a design to make happy or miserable: that is, it ought not to be in vain, by leaving those, who remember one another, in the same Sentiments they were in before; it must produce either Love or Hatred in the principal, not inferior Characters. But those Discoveries, which are immediately follow'd by the Peripetie, are the most beautiful, as that of Oedipus; for the Discovery of his being the Son of Jocasta and Laius, immediately makes him, of happy, the most miserable of Men. The Discovery in Electra is not near so fine, because their Condition and Fortune is not chang'd till some time after: but this, where the Peripetie and Discovery join, will always produce Terror or Pity, the End and Aim of Tragedy. What I have to add, of the several sorts of Discoveries, I shall defer till I have treat'd of the Manners, because those have some Interest in them.

The next thing that we are to consider, are the Characters. Those which are to compose a perfect Tragedy, must not be either perfectly Virtuous and Innocent (as the Duke of Buckingham has observ'd) nor scandalously wicked. To make a perfectly virtuous and innocent Character unfortunate, excites Horror, not Pity nor Terror. To punish the Wicked, gives a sort of satisfaction indeed, but neither Pity nor Terror, the Business of
of Tragedy; for what we never think our selves capable of committing, we can never pity. But the Character of perfect Tragedy shou’d be the Mean betwixt both; but rather Good than Bad. The Character, that has this Mean, shou’d not draw his Misfortunes on him by superlative Wickedness, or Crimes notoriously scandalous, but by involuntary Faults; that is, Frailites proceeding from the Excess of Passion; involuntary Faults, which have been committed either by Ignorance or Imprudence against the natural Temper of the Man, when he was transported by a violent Passion, which he cou’d not suppress; or by some greater, or external Force, in the Execution of such Orders, which he neither cou’d, nor ought to disobey. The Fault of Oedipus is of the first sort, tho he be likewise guilty of the second; that of Thyestes is of the second only; those of Orestes and Ailemon of the third; that is, in Obedience to the Oracle of the Gods: which clears Sophocles of the Fault laid to his charge by Mr. Rowe. In the Plays of the Antients, of this middle Character, were Oedipus, Thyestes, Ailemon, Meleager, Telephus, &c. I shall only give a Draught of the first, being confin’d to great Brevity, since that Example will make the Precept plain.

Corneille, Mr. Dryden, and Lee have quite mistaken this Character: they have made him perfectly Good, whereas Sophocles does not praise him for any thing but his Courage, his good Fortune and Judgment; Qualities equally common to the Good and the Bad, and to those, who are made up of Virtues and Vices. His Fault was his Curiosity; his being transported to Anger by the Insolence of a Coach-man for not giving him the way, which made him kill some Men two days after the Oracle had forewarn’d him, that he shou’d kill his Father. This Action alone sufficiently denotes his Character; but Sophocles has shown him by all his Manners so conformable to this, that he appears in every respect a Man that is neither Good nor Bad, having a Mixture of Virtue and Vice. His Vices are Pride, Violence, Anger, Temenity, and Imprudence; so that it is not for his Parricide, nor his Incleft, that he is made unhappy: those, as they were the Effects of his Curiosity, and his Rashness,
36 An ESSAY on the Art, Rise,
Rashness, Violence and Anger, were the Punishment of them; and those are the Vices that Sophocles would correct in us by this Example of Oedipus.

From what has been said, it appears, that a Fable, with a single Catastrophe, is better than that which has one that is double; and that the Catastrophe, that is unhappy, is better than that which is happy; provided the Unhappiness be the Consequence of some of these Faults, or Fraillties, which I have mention’d; and not the Effect of gross and remarkable Crimes: for these merit the Correction of the Ax, not the Muse.

The Fable that is of the next Excellence, is that which has a double Constitution, and Catastrophe, viz. one happy for the Good, and one unhappy for the Guilty. Tho’ this is more proper for Comedy; where the greatest Enemies go off reconcil’d.

Terror and Compassion being the chief End of Tragedy, and that being produc’d only by the Fable, let us consider what Incidents (which compose the Fable) are the most productive of these two Passions.

All Incidents are Events, that happen betwixt some body or other; and all Incidents, that are terrible or pitiful, happen between Friends, Relations, or the like; for what happens betwixt Enemies has no Tragical Effect. As when a Brother is going to kill, or kills his Brother; the Father his Son, or the Son his Father; the Mother the Son, or the Son the Mother. And these are the proper Incidents that a Poet shou’d employ all his Search and Study to find out.

Now all these Actions may be divided thus: into those, which the Actor performs with an entire Knowledge of what he does, or is going to do, as Medea when she kill’d her Children; Alcmene, when he kill’d his Mother, and the like: And into those done, or about to be done, when the Heinousness of the Crime, which they are going to commit, or do commit, is not known to the Actors till after the Deed is done; when they, that did it, come to discover the Relation of the Persons they have destroy’d: as Alcmæon in the Astydamas, new not that Eryphile was his Mother, whom he had till after her Death; and Telefonus discover’d that
and Progress of the Stage, &c. 37

it was his Father Ulysses he had mortally wounded, after the Fact was done. The third sort of Incident, and the most beautiful, is, when a Man or Woman is going to kill a Relation, who is not known to him or her, and is prevented by a Discovery of their Friendship and Relation. The first is the worst, the last the best, and the second next to the third in Excellence, because here is nothing flagitious and inhuman, but is the Sin of perfect Ignorance; for then the Discovery is very pathetic and moving, as that of Oedipus killing Laius.

In those Incidents of the third kind, to make them perfectly beautiful, like that of Merope and Iphigenia in Euripides, it will be necessary, that the Poet take care to let the Audience know the Relation of his Dramatick Persons, tho' the Persons themselves must not know it till the Discovery. For those Stories of Merope and Iphigenia were perfectly known to the Audience, which gave them all along a Concern for the Danger of the Brother and the Son; and rais'd their Joy and Satisfaction, when the Discovery came and prevented the Event. 'Tis true, that it is no easy matter to meet with such a Story, or indeed to form it without Obscurity and imperfect Beauty; yet if it be done, it answers the Labour and Pains of the Study and Search.

We come now to the Manners, which is the next thing to the Fable in Excellence and Consideration. The Manners distinguish the Characters; and if the Manners be ill express'd, we can never be acquainted with them, and consequently never be terrify'd by foreseeing the Dangers they will produce to the Characters, or Dramatick Persons; nor melt into Pity by feeling their Sufferings. All Dramatick therefore, as well as Epick Persons, ought to have the Manners; that is, their Discourse ought to discover their Inclinations, and what Resolutions they will certainly pursue. The Manners therefore shou'd have four Qualities; they must be, (1.) Good; (2.) Like; (3.) Convenient; (4.) Equal. Good is when they are mark'd; that is, when the Discourse of the Persons makes us clearly and distinctly see their Inclinations, and what good or evil Resolutions they are certain to take. Like relates only to known and publick Persons, whose Characters
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Characters are in History, with which the Poettick Characters must agree; that is, the Poet must not give a Person any Quality contrary to any that History has given him. Convenient, that is, these must be agreeable to the Age, Sex, Climate, Rank, and Condition of the Person that has them.

Respicere Exemplar Vite, morumque jubebo
Doctum Imitatorem, verasque hinc ducere voce.

Thus Horace advises to study Mankind, and from the Observation of them to draw the Proprieties of Characters or Manners. But a thorough Consideration of Ethicks, will be a very great help to the Observation: for when you have once got the true Knowledge of the various Habits of the Mind in their just Order, and the nature of their several Blendings, Mixtures, and Composition; you will with much greater ease make an advantage of your Study of Men, in regard to that, of which we are now discoursing.

As to the Likeness, you must remember, that the evil Qualities, given by History to Princes and Great Men, ought to be omitted by the Poet, if they are contrary to the Character of a Prince, &c. But the Virtues opposite to those known Vices, ought not to be impos’d.

Equal, that is, Constant and Consistent.

Qualis ab incepto processerit, & sibi conflet. Hor.

But if any Character be of unequal Manners, as in Nature, so in Poetry, which is an Imitation of Nature, the Variety and Inequality of the Manners must be equal. The Fearful must not be Brave, nor the Brave Fearful; the Avaricious must not be Generous, and the like.

The Manners therefore of the principal Persons at least ought to be so clearly and fully mark’d, as to distinguish them from all other Men: for Nature has made as great a Distinction between every individual Man by the Turn of his Mind, as by the Form of his Countenance. In this Shakespear has excell’d all the Poets; for he has not only distinguished his principal Persons, but
there is scarce a Messenger comes in, but is visibly different from all the rest of the Persons in the Play. So that you need not to mention the Name of the Person that speaks, when you read the Play; their Manners will sufficiently inform you who it is speaks; whereas in our modern Poets, if the Name of the Person speaking be not read, you can never, by what he says, distinguish one from the other.

But besides these four Qualities of the Manners, there is a fifth essential to their Beauty, viz. that they be necessary: that is, that no vicious or base Quality or Inclination ought to be given to any poetick Person, unless it appear to be absolutely necessary and requisite for the carrying on of the Action.

To make this a little plainer—There are three sorts of Qualities compose the Character of a Hero. First, Such as are absolutely necessary for the Fable and Action; and those are most to appear, and evidently prevail above the rest, so that the Hero is to be known and distinguished by them. The Second are to imbelish the first, and the Third are to sustain both: but an Example will explain this. The first of these in Æneas is the transcendent Goodness of his Nature: The second, that beautifies this, is his solid Piety, and entire Resignation to the Will of the Gods: The third, that sustains both, is an Heroick Fortitude, which is absolutely necessary to the carrying on of any great Design. Thus in Ulysses we find Diffimulation set off by Prudence, and sustain'd by Valour: In Achilles, Rage set off by a noble Vehemence, and sustain'd by a wonderful Courage. This first Quality, as Goodness in Æneas, is to appear thro' his whole Character; Rage thro' Achilles; and Diffimulation thro' Ulysses.

Having thus run thro' the Manners, as briefly as I cou'd to give the Reader any just Idea of their Nature; I shall now conclude my Discourse on the several sorts of Discoveries, because, well manag'd, they add a wonderful Beauty to the Piece; tho it is a Beauty indeed almost entirely unknown to our Stage.

The first Sort of Discovery, is by certain Marks in the Body, either natural or accidental, as some Families have Marks peculiar to them; as the Founders of Thebes and their
An Essay on the Art, Rise,
their Issue had a Lance naturally in their Bodies. Accidental, as the Wound Ulysses had formerly receiv'd in his Thigh by a Boar in Parnassus: Or Tokens, such as the Casket of Ion, which makes the Discovery of his Mother Creusa, whom he was going to kill. Tho this be the least beautiful and artful Discovery, yet it may be more or less artfully manag'd, as that of Ulysses is in the Odyssey, where the Nurse, washing his Feet, discovers the Wound, and by that Ulysses; but when he is oblig'd to shew it to the Shepherds, to confirm them that he was Ulysses, it is less artificial.

The second Sort of Discovery, and that likewise unartful, is when it is made by certain Tokens; as when Orestes had come to the knowledge of his Sister Iphigenia, by a Letter which she gave Pyllades to carry to Orestes at Argos, and told him the Contents by word of mouth, lest the Letter shou'd be lost; he discovers himself to her by mentioning her working a fine piece of Tapestry, that was in her Apartment, and the Lance of Pelops, &c. for these Tokens are no great matter of Invention, since it might have made them twenty other ways.

The third Sort of Discoveries is what is made by Remembrance; that is, when the Sight or Hearing of any thing makes us remember our Misfortunes, &c. as when Ulysses heard Demodocus sing his Actions at Troy, the memory struck him, and drew Tears from him; which discover'd him to Alcinous.

The fourth Sort of Discoveries are made by Reasoning. Thus Iphigenia argues in the Caephe of Æschylus; Neither is a Man come like me; No body is like me but Orestes, it must therefore be Orestes. That of Polydides is beautiful and pathetic; for in the Iphigenia of that Poet (as we have it in Aristotile) Orestes kneeling at the Altar, and just opening his Bofom to receive the sacred Knife, cries out, 'Tis not sufficient that my Sister has been sacrificed to Diana, but I must be so too.

The finest Sort is that which rises from the Subject, or the Incidents of the Fable; as that of Oedipus from his excessive Curiosity; and the Letter of Iphigenia, for it was very natural that she shou'd write to her Brother.
Having thus consider'd the two main Points of the Theory, I shall say a word or two of the Practice. As the Duke of Buckingham has observ'd, the first business of a Tragick Poet, is to draw a Plan of his Design; and having plac'd it in a just Light, and in one View he may best judge of its Probability. But then he must consider, that in this Plan must first be drawn the Fable in general, before he thinks of the Episodes that particularize and circumstantiate it. I'll give you that which is drawn up by Aristotle himself, because it may have the greater Authority with you—— A young Princess is plac'd on the Altar to be sacrific'd, disappears of a sudden from the Eyes of the Spectators, and is carry'd into another Country, where the Custom is to sacrific'e Strangers to the Guardian Goddess of that Country: They make her Priestess of that Temple. Some years after, the Brother of that Princess arrives at the same Place, in obedience to an Oracle; he is no sooner arriv'd, but taken, and as he is going to be sacrific'd, the Discovery is made that he is Brother to the Priestess, which saves his Life.

This is the general and universal Fable without Names, and which may yet receive any Names the Poet pleases; who, adding the Episodes, circumstantiates and makes it particular; as the adding the Madness of Orestes, and the like, makes it proper to that Story.

When the Poet comes to write and work up his Scenes, Aristotles advises, which Orway's Practice confirms, that he shou'd put himself into the same Passion he writes, and imitate the Gestures and Actions of those whom he makes to speak.

The Poet ought to take care in the unravelling the Plot, in which many miscarry: the Plot is all the Play from the Beginning to the Discovery or Unravelling, which is best towards the last Scene of the Play; for if the Unraveling be in the fourth Act, the rest must be dull and heavy. But when the Peripeties and Discovery come together, and all at the End of the Play, the Audience go away with Pleasure and Satisfaction.

Having said so much of the Fable, Incidents, Manners, &c. I shall add a word or two on the Sentiments; in which
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which we must follow the Advice of the Duke of Buck-
ingham.

* Nay more, for they must look within to find
* Those secret Turns of Nature in the Mind.*

But then the Poet must not be content to look into
his Mind, to see what he himself shou’d think on such
an Occasion, but he must put himself into the Passion,
Quality, and Temper of the Character he is to draw; that
is, he must assume the Manners he gives his Dramatick
Person, and then see what Sentiments or Thoughts such
an Occasion, Passion, or the like, will produce. And
the Poet must change his Person, as a different Person
and Character speaks; or he will make all speak alike,
without any distinction of Character. Gaffarel gives you
an Account of Campanella, which will illustrate this
Place. He says, ‘That going to see him when in the
Inquisition, he found him making several odd Faces,
which he took to be the Effect of the Pains he had en-
dur’d there; but on his asking Gaffarel what sort of
Man such a Cardinal was, and enquiring into his Fea-
tures, he found that Campanella was framing himself
by the force of Imagination to the Likeness of the
Cardinal, to know what Answer he shou’d have to a
Letter he had sent him.’

Now if the forming our outward Figure cou’d be of
such Use, as to make us think like another, certainly
when the Imagination proceeds by its own Strength and
Force, to liken the Soul as well as the Body, it must
have a wonderful Effect: yet this cannot be done but
by a great Genius.

I shall say no more of the Sentiments here, because
they are to be learn’d from the Art of Rhetorick more
than that of Poetry. For the Sentiments being all that
make up the Discourse, they consist in proving, refu-
ting, exciting and expressing the Passions, as Pity, Anger,
Fear, and all the others; to raise or debase the Value of
any thing. The Reasons of Poets and Orators are the
same when they would make things appear worthy of
Pity,
Pity, or terrible, or great, or probable; tho' some things are render'd so by Art, and others by their own Nature.

The Diction or Language is that which next comes under our Consideration; which, tho' made so considerable a Part by our modern Play-wrights (who indeed have little else to value themselves upon) was by Aristotle thought of the least Importance; tho' it is confess'd, when the Elocution is proper and elegant, and varies as it ought, it gives a great and very advantageous Beauty to a Play. The Fable, the Manners, and the Sentiments are without doubt the most considerable; for, as Aristotle observes, a Tragedy may be perfect without the Assistance of Elocution: for the Subject may be well manage'd, the Manners well mark'd, and the Sentiments may be just and fine, tho' ill express'd. An ill Elocution renders the Discourse flat, but that destroys not the Beauty of the other Parts. Besides, a Tragedy may be written in Prose as well as Verse; that is, those other three Parts may be as well express'd in Prose as Verse; but Verse is made use of, because more harmonious, and by consequence more agreeable.

But as we err as much in this part of Tragedy as in the other three, it would be necessary to give some Rules of Distinction on this Head: but that I have not room to do in this place; and Propriety and Elegance of Diction must be learn'd from Grammar and Rhetoric. However, I will not pass this entirely in silence, but shall lay down two or three Rules which are absolutely necessary to give any true Beauty to a Dramatick Diction.

Some have been betray'd by their Ignorance of Art and Nature to imagine, that because the Stile of Milton's Paradise Lost is admirable in the Epick Poem, it will be so in Tragedy; not considering that Milton himself has vary'd his Stile mightily in his Sampson Agonistes, from that of his Paradise. And Mr. Dryden's Criticism is very just, in his Epistle to the Marquis of Normanby (the late Duke of Buckingham) before the Æneis; where quoting from Segrais and Bossu—That the Stile of an Heroick Poem ought to be more lofty than that of the Drama—'The Critick is in the right, says he, for the Reason already urg'd. The Work of Tragedy is on the Paf-
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...and Boyle, a judicious Critick as well as Poet, has

Words to this effect—Would you deserve the Ap-

plause of the Publick? In writing, diversify your Stile

incessantly: too equal, and too uniform a Manner

shines to no purpose, and inclines us to sleep. Rarely

are those Authors read, who are born to plague us, and

who appear always whining in the same ingrateful Tone.

Happy the Man, who can so command his Voice, as

to pass without any Contrain from that which is

Grave, to that which is Moving; and from that which

is Pleasant, to that which is Severe and Solemn. Every

Passion has its proper way of speaking, which a Man of

Genius will easily derive from the very Nature of the

Passion he writes. Anger is proud, and utters haughty

words, but speaks in words less fierce and fiery when it

debates; Grief is more humble, and speaks a Language

like it self, dejected, plain, and sorrowful.

Profectis Ampullas, & sesquipedalia Verba,

As Horace justly observes. From these few Observations

it is evident how far from fine Language some of our

Poets are, who have had Success even for that alone, in

spight of all the Absurdities of the Fable, Manners, and

Sentiments; tho in reality they were no more excellent

in this, than in those.

Thus have we seen that Tragedy is an Imitation of an

Action of a just Extent, i.e. that has a Beginning, Middle,

and End, and which shall produce Pity and Terror. But

this Action not being to be perform'd or represented with-

out human Agents in that Action, it necessarily brings in

an Under-Imitation of those Men in that Action; that is,

of their Manners, as they contribute to that Action: and

this makes a Necessity of imitating the Men that are in-

troduc'd in the Drama.

We must not expect many Instances of Shakespear's

Perfection in the Fable, tho perhaps we may find some

extraordinary Strokes that way likewise; but the Beau-

ties of the Manners we shall find every where, as I shall shew in my Examen of his Plays.

It may perhaps be expected, that I should say something of Comedy. But I have insensibly swell'd this Discourse to a greater Bulk than I at first design'd; so that I shall only say in general, that Comedy participates in many things of the Rules of Tragedy: that is, it is an Imitation both of Action and Manners; but those must both have a great deal of the Ridiculum in them, and indeed Humour is the Characteristic of this Poem, without which a Comedy loses its Name; as we have many of late who fall from the Ridiculum into a mere Dialogue, distinguishing only by a pert Sort of Chit-Chat, and little Aims at Wit. Ben. Johnson is our best Pattern, and has given us this Advantage, that tho the English Stage has scarce yet been acquainted with the Shadow of Tragedy, yet we have excell'd all the Antients in Comedy.

There is no Man has had more of this Vis Comica than our Shakespeare, in particular Characters; and in the Merry Wives of Windsor, he has given us a Play that wants but little of a perfect Regularity. Comedy in England has met with the Fate of Tragedy in Athens, for that only has yet been cultivated; whereas the polite Athenians took first care of Tragedy, and it was late ere the Magistrate took any Notice of Comedy, or thought it worthy their Inspektion.

All Arts indeed improve as they find Encouragement; our Statesmen have never yet thought it worth their while to rescue the Drama from the Hands of the Ignorant, and the Benefit of private Persons, under which Load of Obstacles it can never rise to any Perfection; and place such Men in the Management of it, as may turn it to the Advantage of the Publick. Whether this be any Proof of their good Politicks or not, I shall not here determine; but I am sure, that very Politick Nations, that is, the Greeks and the Romans, had far other Sentiments.

This naturally leads me to the Rise of the Stage in Greece, where it was entirely rais'd by Tragedy; for Thespis first made a moving Stage for that Poem, tho it was not then, as it is now, pure and unmix'd: for the ill Subjects,
Subjects, that Thespis chose, threw him upon a sort of Tragi-Comedy; which Error Æschylus corrected, by chusing only noble Subjects, and an exalted Stile, that being before too burlesque. So that as far as we may guess, the Plays of Thespis were not unlike some of those of our Shakespeare. For it was some time before the Stage came to its Magnificence and Purity, even in Greece itself, at least in Comedy: For the People are generally the same in all Countries, and obstinately retain licentious and obscene things; and it is the Property of Roughness and Barbarism to give place to Politeness with a great deal of difficulty. Nay, Sophocles was the first that purg'd Tragedy itself entirely, and brought it to its true Majesty and Gravity. For, as Dacier observs, the Changes that Tragedy and Comedy underwent, were brought about by little and little, because it was impossible to discover what was proper for them at once; and new Graces were added to them, as the Nature of these Poems came better to be understood.

'Tis true, that the Idea of Tragedy was taken from the Iliads and Odysse of Homer; and of Comedy from his Poem call'd Margites: but that was after these Poems had been in use in a ruder manner; then indeed Homer inspir'd the Improvers and Reformers of the Stage with this noble Idea. Tragedy indeed had a very advantageous Rife in Greece, falling immediately under the Inspection of the Magistrate, being founded on Religion: and this carry'd it so soon to Perfection, to which it wou'd never have arriv'd, had it been in the hands of private Persons, and mercenary Players, ignorant of its Beauties and Defects, and whose Thoughts reach no farther than what they are us'd to; which turning to a tolerable Advantage to their Pockets, they believe there is no greater Perfection. But Athens was too wise, too polite a State to let that fade and remain useless in the hands of the Ignorant, which, by the Care of the Wife and Knowing, might be turn'd to the Publick Advantage and Glory.

Tragedy, as I have said, had the Advantage of being grafted on the Goat-song, or Vintage-song, in the Honour of Bacchus; which, being a Recitation only, Thespis first made
made a Stage, and introduc'd one Actor. Æschylus add-
ed a second Actor, and fix'd his Stage, and adorn'd it in
a more magnificent manner; but then the same Orna-
ments serv'd all Plays. Sophocles added a third Actor,
and vary'd the Ornaments, and brought Tragedy to Per-
fec tion, and into such Esteem with the Athenians, that
they spent more in the Decorations of the Theatre, than
in all their Persian Wars; nay, the Money appropriated
to that Use, was look'd on as so sacred, that Demo-
phoses, with Difficulty and a great deal of Art, attempted
to alienate some of it to the Defence of Greece against Phi-
lip of Macedon.

The Alterations that were made in this Poem, in so
little a time, were almost in every Part of it; in the very
Numbers, as well as in the Subject, Manners, and Dic-
tion: For the first Verse of the earliest Tragedies were
Tetrameters, or a sort of Burlesque, and fit for Coun-
trysmen Songs, and not unlike our Doggrel. But on the
reforming the Stage, it was turn'd into Trimeter Iamb-
icks: For, as Dacier from Aristotle observes, those
Numbers were fitted for Tragedy, which were most like
our common Discourse, and consequently it was Trimeter
Iambicks, for that was most us'd in familiar Conversation:
and Tragedy says he, being an Imitation, ought to ad-
mit nothing but what is easy and natural.

But as this seems to relate chiefly to the Greek and La-
tin Diction, so it will not be amiss to give you something
like it in the English, at the Rise of the Drama here. I
shall take the Examples of both from Shakespeare alone,
to show this Error mended by himself, and brought to
such a Perfection, that the highest Praise is to imitate his
Stile.

What they call'd their Tetrameters may be answer'd by
the Doggrel in the Comedy of Errors, and Love's Labour
Lost.

Balu. Good Meat, Sir, is common, that every Churle
affords.

E. Ant. And Welcome more common, for that's no-
thing but Words.

S. Drom. Either get thee from the Door, or sit down
at the Hatch;
Doft thou conjure for Wenches, that thou call’st for such Store?
When one is one too many, go get thee from the Door.

But lest this shou’d be thought passable in the Mouths of the Dromios, and their Masters, we shall see, in those of Lords and Princes, in Love’s Labour Lost; first Boyet, of the Retinue of the Princes of France, and the Princess her self.

Princess. It was well done of you to take him at his word.

Boyet. I was as willing to grapple, as he was to board. Maria one of the Two hot Sheeps, Marry, and Ladies of Honour. § therefore not Ships.

Boyet. No Sheep, sweet Lamb, unlefs we feed on your Lips.

Princess. Good Wits will be jangling, but Genteels agree——

The civil War of Wits were much better us’d

On Navarre, and his Book-men, for here ’tis abus’d.

In short, these fale Numbers and Rhimes are almost thro’ the whole Play; which must confirm any one, that this was one of his first. But that Verse, which answers both the Latin and the Greek, is our Blank Verse, which generally consists of Iambics, and so fit for the Drama, that tho Mr. Dryden had once brought rhiming on the Stage so much into fashion, that he told us plainly in one of his Prefaces, that we shou’d scarce see a Play take in this Age without it; yet as soon as The Rehearsal was acted, that violent and unnatural Mode vanish’d, and Blank Verse refum’d its place. A thousand beautiful Examples of this Verse might be taken out of Shakespear, there scarce being a Play of his which will not furnish us with many; I shall satisfy my self here with an Instance or two out of the Much Adoe about Nothing.

And
And bid her steal into the pleasant Bower,
Where Honey-Suckles, ripen'd by the Sun,
Forbid the Sun to enter; like Favourites
Made proud by Princes, that advance their Pride,
Against that Power that made it, etc.
The pleasantest Angling is to see the Fish
Cut with their Golden Oars the Silver Stream,
And greedily devour the treacherous Bait.

Comedy, on the other hand, lay long uncultivated in private Hands, among the Mob or Country Fellows, without any regard of the Government; till at last Epicharmus and some others taking the Idea from the Margites of Homer, and having purg'd the Country Railleries from their Licentiousness, the Magistrates of Athens took it into their Consideration, that it might be of use to the State in the Hands, and under the Management of the Publick. And thus, by the Encouragement and Inspection of the Government, the Drama of both kinds arrived to Perfection in not many Years after their Appearance in the World.

But it was not so in Rome, it was in the 399th Year of the City, when any thing like a Stage got into Rome; and tho' it was introduc'd to appease a great Plague, which could not be averted by any other Propitiation, yet they being originally perform'd by Strangers, the Romans had little regard to them. For on this Occasion they sent for Players out of Etruria, which in their Language they call Hisfer, from whence the Romans call'd their Actors Histriones. Nor did these make use of any Verse, but dance'd to the Tunes of their Pipes, with Measures not indecent, after the Thesban manner. The young Sparks began to imitate them by rallying one another in undigested Verses. With their Voices their Motions agreed; so that the Matter was receiv'd, and by often Repetition came into a Mode. But the Players did not, as in the Fescennine Verses, rally one another with extempore Verses; but representing Pastorals, call'd Saures, with Vocal Music, set to the Instrumental, and a regular Action, perform'd their Parts. But Livius Andronicus, a Greek by Nation, was the first (some Years after
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after this) who ventur'd to mingle a Fable with these Songs, acting himself in these Performances, as then all the Poets did. This Livy tells us, and the fame we find in Valerius Maximus, Lib. 2. Cap. 4. ' From which we see, from what small Beginnings the Scenic Plays arose:

First, Players were sent for out of Etruria, who danc'd without either Verse or Piper; After this, rude and unpolish'd Verse came in, and Motions something agreeable to the Voice; but at last all things were improv'd by Art.' Tho these two Accounts do not agree in every Particular, we easily see the low Rise of the Stage in this City; which tho brought in at first for the appeasing a raging Pestilence, yet the Players, who belong'd to the Drama, had their Names put out of the List of their Tribe, some say by way of Disgrace, and were never permitted to have the Honour to go to the Wars but on the greatest Extremity; yet this might be in respect to their Preservation, as the Athenians made a Law when Eupolis was kill'd in a Sea-Fight, that Poets shou'd go no more to the Wars. But be this as it will; yet in time, when it had work'd it self out of the Dregs of the People, the State took notice of it, and no Play was permitted to be acted, which was not approv'd by the Ædile, who had the same Care of the Stage in Rome, as the Choragus had in Athens; Agrippa was Ædile in Rome, and the great Themistocles was Choragus in Athens.

But notwithstanding the Ædiles took care at last of the Roman Stage, yet that never came to the Excellence of that of Athens; at least if we may judge of their Tragedies by those of Seneca, which are in nothing comparable to those of the Greek Poets. The Medea of Ovid, (had it been extant) might perhaps have shown us something more perfect, for he was much better qualify'd for that, than the Philosopher.

In England Plays begun at the very bottom of the People, and mounted by degrees to the State we now see them in, the yet imperfect Diversion of Ladies, and Men of the first Quality. Queen Elizabeth first distinguish'd Actors, from Strollers and Vagabonds, by making them Gentlemen of her Bed-Chamber, as some say, at least her Domestic Servants; and then it was that Shake-
and Progress of the Stage, &c. 51

Spear ennobled the rude Scene, giving it a Grace, which it knew not before, and sufficient to please so wise and good a Prince's. But the Glory of giving it Perfection, yet remains for a no less excellent King; and the Muses have reason to hope, that He, that is so universal a Patron of Liberty, will not leave them in their old Bondage. For while the Poet's Success depends so much upon the injudicious Taste of the Managers, and the Whim of the unjudging Town, it is impossible that this glorious Art can ever be brought to that Excellence to which it arriv'd in Greece; Opinion or Chance, and the Address of the Players having given many of our modern Tragedies a sort of temporary Success. But because in a little time those Plays, which were cry'd up without Merit, lose ground, and grow neglected, some of our Play-wrights have pretended that our Taste of Tragedy is lost, and that the Best will not do. But certainly that is a very ill Argument, for we see that The Orphan, Venice Preserv'd, and good Tragedies, increase in Esteem, and bring as good Audiences as any Comedies. But the same Argument will hold against Comedies; for after Opinion or Whim have given them a sort of Run at their first Appearance, they flag in a little time for want of innate Merit, and sink, so that in a year or two they will not bring ten Pounds. And tho' an ingenious Gentleman has told us, that Tragi-Comedies will do better than Tragedies, I must say that the same Reason will hold against them; for I know scarce one of them, except Shakespeare's, that brings any great Audiences. But I am confident, had we good Tragedies written, according to the Art I have laid down, and that they had fair Play at first from the Managers, the Diversion is so noble and great, they wou'd find another sort of Success than our Trifles have met with, and last for ever. At least we have Reason to think so, for all that we have yet seen to the contrary in Experience.

Thus have I given my Thoughts on Shakespeare, laid down the Rules of true judging and judicious Writing, and given a View of the Rise and Progress of the Drama in Greece, Rome, and England; from whence
An Essay on the Art, &c.

whence it is plain, that the only way to make the Stage flourish, is to put it into the Hands of the Magistrate, and the Management of Men of Learning and Genius; which would once again bring this admirable Art to its ancient Perfection.
An Explanation of the Old Words us'd by Shakespeare in his Works.

A

Acknow'dned. known, ac-
knowledge'd, &c.
Agnoze. acknowledge, con-
fits, avow, &c.
Argoues. Ships, &c.
Arotst. avant, be gone, stand off, &c.
Assubjudicate. subdue, &c.

B

Ballow. Pole, long Stick, Quarter-staff, &c.
Betrims. adorns, decks, &c.
Bevel. crooked, awry.
Beteem. to bring forth, or breed.
Befmirch'd. daub'd, &c.
Biggen. a Child's Coif, or Quoif.
Bisson-Rheum. blind Rheum.
Blenches. Faults.
To Brench. sin, fear.
Blood-Bolter'd. smear'd with dry Blood.
Bourn. Limits, Bounds, &c.
Bowky. fat, swell'd, &c.
Busky. id, or woody.
Braid. trim, finical, wove, &c.
Brach. a kind of Hound, &c.
A Broch. a Buckle, Brace-
let, Noose, Spit, &c.

C

Cleeps. calls, names, &c.
Cope'smate. Companion.
Congest. heap'd together.
Cautless. incautious.
Canary'd to it. danc'd to it, or was joyful at it.
To Carol. To sing.
A Callet. a Whore.
Cef's. a Tax.
Clake or Clack. to make an ingratitude Noise, &c.
Congreeing, for agreeing, &c.
Cleap. haunt, attend, brood on, &c.
Climquant. sounding, &c.
The Cranks. Offices.
Costard. Head, or Blockhead.
Cringes. Hinges.
Chusnerel. Whore-mast'r, Debauchee, &c.

D

dane. moist, raw, &c.
Dowle. A Feather, or rather the single Particles of the Down.
To Daffe. to baffle, ban-
ter, cheat, &c.
Dulcet. sweet.
Down-gyved. turn'd or ty'd down with Fetters.
Dearn. Solitude, &c.

Dumps.
Dumps. Melancholy, fix'd Sadness, &c.

E

Eld. Age, Antiquity, Fore-fathers, old Times, &c.
Empleached. bound together, interwove, &c.
Empatron'd. got a Patron.
Enseoffed himself. took pos-
session of the Inheritance, &c.

Exsufficate. blown.

F

Foyzon. Plenty, Abundance,
Strength, Heart-Juice,
Moisture, &c.
Fends. defends, guards, &c.
Famoused. made famous.
Frampol'd. troublesome, un-
easy, &c.
Foining Fence. masterly De-
defence.

Flourists or Frourets. small
Flower, or Beds of Flowers.
Franklin. A Freeman, or
Gentleman, &c.

To Fatigate. to tire, weary,
&c.

Foreign. Enemies.
Feneless. without End.

G

Guerdon'd. pay'd, rewarded
with, given to, &c.
Gauds. Bawbles, gawdy
Things, or ridiculous
Jests, &c.

To Gleek. Jeer, &c.
Glyke. id.
Geek, or Gull. to cheat,
defraud, &c.
The Geft, a Bed, Couch, &c.

Grimms. a Ring of two
Round.
Garjih. gay, glaring, &c.
Gleeful. merry, laughing, &c.
God-eyl'd us. God defend
or do us good.
Gouts of Blood. great Drops
of Blood.

To Gibber. To flout, chattering,
&c.
Gasled. frighted.
To Gallow. To fright.
Gasiness. Fright.
Graff. Graft, &c.
Gosemore. a little light.
Down, that flies about in
the Air, by every Wind
blown about.

H

Hied, or Hyed. made haste to.
Hefts. commands.
Hent. took hold of.

Hight. call'd.

Hefted. as tender-hefted, ten-
derly dispos'd, &c.
Harried. daunted, scolded
at, frightened, handled so
roughly.

I

Intendment. Intention.
Ingirts. surrounds.

An Incony Wit. a mimicking Wit, &c.
Imbofs him. noos'd him,
circumvented him, &c.
Immoment. of no value.

K

Kam. awry, quite from the
Matter. Clean Kam. quite
from the purpose.

L. Lush.
The Glossary.

**L**
- Lust. Luxury, Lewdness, &c.
- Lass-orn, depriv’d or deserr-ed by his Lass or Mistress.
- Leaman, a Gallant, Stallion, &c.
- Lover’d. have a Lover.
- Lither-Sky, lower, lazy, plain.
- Liestest, dearest, &c.

**M**
- Moody, or Mood. angry, and Anger, &c.
- Meed. Reward.
- Murky. obscure, dark, &c.
- Maund. a Basket, Scrip, &c.
- Mark. dark, &c.
- To Melt. to meddle with, or mingle, &c.
- Manakin. a little Man.
- Mammerying. Muttering.

**N**
- Nill. will not.
- Nole. an Asles Nole. Asles Head and Neck.
- Nay Word. a Word of Infamy or Contempt.

**O**
- Orts. Scraps, Leavings, &c.
- Orgilous. proud.
- Oursbut. Escape.

**P**
- Palmers. Pilgrims, &c.
- Poleclipt. clipt in the Head.
- Phrafeless Hand: a Hand whose Beauty no Phrase can express.
- A Priser. one that fights Prizes, or wrestles for Prizes, &c.
- Fight upon or over. Fight to do it, prop’d, settled, cast, &c.
- Palliament. a Garment.
- Robe, &c.
- To Palter. to trifle, banter, &c.
- Paragon. Peer or Equal.
- Pannelled me. follow’d, attended me, &c.

**Q**
- Quern. Churn.
- Quarrellous. quarrelsome, full of Complaint, &c.

**R**
- Rank. full, a River rank, full.
- Recketh, or wrecketh. values, thinks, reflects.
- Rigol. a Clavicord, or what makes merry, diverts, &c.
- Recheate. a manner of blowing the Horn to call the Dogs together.
- Rebate. or Head-dress.
- Rest. bereft, depriv’d of, &c.; Raide. dres’d.
- Roisling. bullying, nois’d, &c.
- Ribald. crows, nois’d, impudent, &c.
- Roneyon. a Rake, &c.
- The Romage of the Land. Disturbances, &c.
- To Reverb. repeat, return, reply, &c.
- To Renege. to deny.

**S**
- Riggish. rampant, ruttish, &c.
- Snaep’d Birds. beak’d, bill’d, &c.
- Siege. Excrement.
- Suggested. tempted, provoked, prompted.
- Sea-Marge. a Cliff, or the Banks of the Sea.
The Glossary.

Stell'd. stor'd, contain'd.
To Shrive. To meet, revel, confess, or hear one's Confession, lifted in a Roll, &c.
Smoog'd. smoak'd.
Shien. Shine.
To Square. to quarrel, &c.
Saws, Maxims, Proverbs, Sayings, &c.
A Bed-Swarver. one inconstant to his Bed, a Rover, a Debauchee, &c.
Scath. Mischief, Loss, Wrong, Harm, Prejudice, &c.
Scroyls. Corfairs.
To Sker or Skir. to glide or move swiftly.
Soilage. a Blot.
To Scale a thing. to weigh it in Scales, &c.
To Sowle. to lugge one by the Ears.
Shrift. Confession, &c.
Siar. Decay.
To S.ig. to waver, be dismay'd, &c.
Scar. Care, or Value, &c.
T
To Trash. to lop, &c.
Totter'd. shaken, tottering, weak, tumbling, &c.
To Tar. to set on, pro-

voke, &c.
Trenchant Sword. the Sword that cuts a gap, or wounds, indenture, &c.
Tricksey. brisk, active, nimble, &c.
Thewes. Sinews, or Modes, Manners, Customs, &c.

Umber'd Face. a Face smeared with Umber, or a yellowish Face.
Unhosted. without the Sacrament.
Unknell'd. without the Passing Bell going for a dying Man.
Unhoused. free, unconfin'd, &c.
Unkin'd. without Children.

W
Welkin. the Heavens, Sky, &c.
Whileare. lately.
Wend. go.
Wrecks. thinks of, cares for, or values.
Withers. the Shoulders of a Horse.
Wother. Merit, Beauty, &c.
With a Winnion. with a Vengeance, &c.

Y
Xciped. call'd.

V. E N U S
VENUS
AND
ADONIS.

Vilia miretur vulgus, mibi flavus Apollo
Pocaule Castalia plena ministret aqua.
Ovid. Amor. l. 1. El. 15.
To the Right Honourable

Henry Wriothesly,
Earl of Southampton,

AND

Baron of Tichfield:

Right Honourable,

Know not how I shall offend,
in Dedicating my unpolished
Lines to your Lordship; nor
how the World will censure
me, for choosing so strong a
Prop to support so weak a Burden: Only
if your Honour seem but pleased, I ac-
count my self highly praised; and vow
to take advantage of all idle Hours, till

D. 6.
Epistle Dedicatory.

I have honoured you with some graver Labour. But if the first Heir of my Invention prove deformed, I shall be sorry it had so noble a Godfather, and never after ear so barren a Land, for fear it yield me still so bad a Harvest. I leave it to your honourable Survey, and your Honour to your Heart's Content; which I wish may always answer your own Wish, and the World's hopeful Expectation.

Your Honour's in all Duty,

WILL. SHAKESPEARE.
Venus and Adonis.

VEN as the Sun, with purple-coloured Face;
Had ta'en his last Leave of the weeping Morn,
Rose-cheek'd Adonis hied him to the Chase:
Hunting he lov'd, but Love he laugh'd to scorn.
Sick-thoughted Venus makes amain unto him,
And like a bold-fac'd Sutor gins to woo him.

Thrice fairer than my self! (thus she began)
The Fields sweet Flower! sweet above compare!
Stain to all Nymphs! more lovely than a Man!
More white and red, than Doves or Roses are!
Nature, that made thee with her self at strife,
Saith, that the World hath ending with thy Life.

Vouchsafe, thou Wonder! to alight thy Steed,
And rein his proud Head to the Saddle-Bow;
If thou wilt deign this Favour, for thy Meed,
A thousand honey Secrets shalt thou know.
Here come and sit, where Serpent never hisses,
And being set, I'll smother thee with Kisses.
And yet not cloy thy Lips with loathed Satiety,  
But rather famish them amid their Plenty;  
Making them red and pale with fresh Variety:  
Ten Kisses short as one, one long as twenty.  
A Summer's Day will seem an Hour but short,  
Being wasted in such Time-beguiling Sport.

With this she seizeth on his Sweating Palm,  
The President of Rith and Livelihood,  
And trembling in her Passion calls it Balm;  
Earth's Sovereign Salve to do a Goddess good.  
Being so enrag'd, Defire doth lend her Force,  
Courageously to pluck him from his Horse.

Over one Arm the lufty Courser's Rein,  
Under the other was the tender Boy,  
Who blusht'd and pouted in a dull Disdain,  
With leaden Appetite, unapt to toy.  
She red and hot, as Coals of glowing Fire;  
He red for Shame, but frosty in Delire.

The studded Bridle, on a ragged Bough,  
Nimbly she fastens (O how quick is Love!)  
The Steed is stalled up, and even now  
To tie the Rider she begins to prove.  
Backward she push'd him, as she would be thrust,  
And govern'd him in Strength, tho not in Luft.

So soon was she along, as he was down,  
Each leaning on their Elbows and their Hips;  
Now doth she stroke his Cheek, now doth he frown,  
And 'gins to chide, but soon she stops his Lips:  
And kissing speaks, with lustful Language broken,  
If thou wilt chide, thy Lips shall never open.

He burns with bashful Shame; she, with her Tears,  
Doth quench the maiden burning of his Cheeks:  
Then with her windy Sighs and golden Hairs,  
To fan and blow them dry again she seeks.  
He says she is immodest, blames her mists;  
What follows more, she smoother's with a Kiss.  

Even
VENUS and ADONIS.

Even as an empty Eagle, sharp by Faith,
Tires with her Beak on Feathers, Flesh and Bone,
Shaking her Wings, devouring all in haste,
Till either Gorge be stuff'd, or Prey be gone:
   Even so she kiss'd his Brow, his Cheek, his Chin,
   And where she ends, she doth anew begin.

Forc'd to consent, but never to obey,
Panting he lies, and breathing in her Face:
She feed'd on the Steam as on a Prey,
And calls it, Heavenly Moisture! Air of Grace!
    Wishing her Cheeks were Gardens full of Flowers,
    So they were dew'd with such distilling Showers.

Look how a Bird lies tangled in a Net,
So fasten'd in her Arms Adonis lies:
Pure Shame and aw'd Resistance made him fret;
Which bred more Beauty in his angry Eyes.
       Rain added to a River, that is rank,
       Perforce will force it overflow the Bank.

Still she entreats, and prettily entreats;
For to a pretty Ear she tunes her Tale:
Still he is sullen, still he lowers and frets,
'Twixt Crimson Shame, and Anger ashy Pale.
    Being red, she loves him best; and being white,
    Her Breast is better'd with a more Delight.

Look how he can, she cannot chuse but love;
And by her fair immortal Hand she swears,
From his soft Bosom never to remove,
Till he take Truce with her contending Tears;
    Which long have rain'd, making her Cheeks all wet,
    And one sweet Kiss shall pay this countless Debt.

Upon this Promise did he raise his Chin,
Like a Dive-dapper peering thro' a Wave,
Who, being look'd on, ducks as quickly in:
So offers he to give what she did crave:
    But when his Lips were ready for his Pay,
    He winks, and turns his Lips another way.

Never
Venus and Adonis.

Never did Passenger, in Summer's Heat,
More thirst for Drink, than she for this good Turn;
Her Help she sees, but Help she cannot get,
She bathes in Water, yet in Fire must burn.
Oh Pity, 'gan she cry, flint-hearted Boy!
'Tis but a Kiss I beg, why art thou coy?

I have been woo'd, as I intreat thee now;
Even by the stern and direful God of War,
Whose sinewy Neck in Battel ne'er did bow,
Who conquers where he comes in every Jar:
Yet hath he been my Captive and my Slave,
And beg'd for that which thou unask'd shalt have.

Over my Altars hath he hung his Lance,
His batter'd Shield, his uncontrolled Crest;
And for my sake hath learn'd to sport and dance;
To coy, to wanton, dally, smile and jest:
Scorning his churlish Drum, and Ensign red,
Making my Arms his Field, his Tent my Bed.

Thus he, that over-rul'd, I over-sway'd,
Leading him Prisoner in a red Rose Chain;
Strong temper'd Steel, his stronger Strength obey'd;
Yet was he servile to my coy Disdain.
Oh be not proud, nor brag nor of thy Might;
For mastring her, that foil'd the God of Fight!

Touch but my Lips with those fair Lips of thine
(Tho mine be not so fair, yet they are red)
The Kiss shall be thine own as well as mine;
What seest thou on the Ground? Hold up thy Head;
Look in mine Eye-balls where thy Beauty lies,
Then why not Lips on Lips, since Eyes on Eyes?

Art thou ashamed to kiss? Then wink again,
And I will wink, so shall the Day seem Night,
Love keeps his Revels, where there be but twain
Be bold to play, our Sport is not in sight.
Venus and Adonis

These blue-vein'd Violets, whereon we lean,
Never can blab, nor know they what we mean.

The tender Spring, upon thy tempting Lip,
Shews thee unripe; yet may'st thou well be tasted.
Make use of Time, let not Advantage slip,
Beauty within itself would not be wasted.
Fair Flowers, that are not gather'd in their Prime;
Rot and consume themselves in little time.

Were I hard-favour'd, foul, or wrinkled old,
Ill-natur'd, crooked, churlish, harsh in Voice,
O'er-worn, despised, rheumatick and cold,
Thick-fighted, barren, lean, and lacking Juice:
Then mightst thou pause, for then I were not for thee.
But, having no Defects, why doth abhor me?

Thou canst not see one Wrinkle in my Brow,
Mine Eyes are grey, and bright, and quick in turning;
My Beauty, as the Spring, doth yearly grow;
My Flesh as soft and plump, my Marrow burning;
My smooth moist Hand, were it with thy Hand felt,
Would in thy Palm dissolve, or seem to melt.

Bid me discourse, I will enchant thine Ear;
Or, like a Fairy, trip upon the Green;
Or, like a Nymph, with long dishevel'd Hair;
Dance on the Sands, and yet no footing seen.
Love is a Spirit all compact of Fire,
Not gross to sink, but light; and will aspire.

Witness this Primrose-Bank, whereon I lie,
The forceless Flowers, like sturdy Trees, support me:
Two strengthless Doves will draw me thro' the Sky
From Morn till Night, even where I lift to sport me.
Is Love so light, sweet Boy, and may it be,
That thou shouldst think it heavy unto thee?

Is thine own Heart to thine own Face affected?
Can thy right Hand seize Love upon thy left?
Venus and Adonis.

Then wooe thy self, be of thy self rejeced,
Steal thine own Freedom, and complain of Theft.
Narcissus to himself, himself forlook,
And dy'd to kifs his Shadow in the Brook:

Torches are made to light, Jewels to wear,
Dainties to taste, fresh Beauty for the ufe,
Herbs for their Smell, and sappy Plants to bear;
Things growing to themselves are Growth's Abuse:
Seeds spring from Seeds, and Beauty breedeth Beauty;
Thou wert begot, to get it is thy Duty.

Upon the Earth's Increase why shouldst thou feed,
Unless the Earth with thy Increase be fed?
By Law of Nature thou art bound to breed,
That thine may live, when thou thy self art dead:
And fo, in fpight of Death, thou doft survive,
In that thy Likeness still is left alive.

By this the Love-sick Queen began to swear,
For, where they lay, the Shadow had forlooked them;
And Titan, tir'd in the Mid-day Heat,
With burning Eye did hotly overlook them:
Wishing Adonis had his Team to guide,
So he were like him, and by Venus' Side.

And now Adonis with a lazy Spright,
And with a heavy, dark, disliking Eye,
His low'ring Brows, o'erwhelming his fair Sight,
Like misty Vapours, when they blot the Sky;
Souring his Cheeks, cries, Fie, no more of Love,
The Sun doth burn my Face, I must remove.

Ah me! (quoth Venus) young, and so unkind!
What bare Excuses mak'ft thou to be gone?
I'll figh Celestial Breath, whose gentle Wind
Shall cool the Heat of this descending Sun.
I'll make a Shadow for thee of my Hairs,
If they burn too, I'll quench them with my Tears.

The
Venus and Adonis

The Sun that shines from Heaven shines but warm,
And, loe, I lie between the Sun and thee!
The Heat I have from thence doth little harm,
Thine Eye darts forth the Fire that burneth me,
And, were I not immortal, Life were done,
Between this Heav'nly and this Earthly Sun.

Art thou obdurate, flinty, hard as Steel?
Nay more than Flint, for Stone at Rain relenteth:
Art thou a Woman's Son, and canst not feel
What 'tis to love, how want of Love tormenteth?
Oh! had thy Mother born so bad a Mind,
She had not brought forth thee, but died unkind.

What am I, that thou shouldst contemn me this?
Or what great Danger dwells upon my Suit?
What were thy Lips the worse for one poor Kiss?
Speak fair: But speak fair Words, or else be mute.
Give me one Kiss, I'll give it thee again,
And one for Int'rest, if thou wilt have twain.

Fie, lifeless Picture, cold and senseless Stone,
Well-painted Idol, Image dull and dead;
Statute contenting but the Eye alone,
Thing like a Man, but of no Woman bred.
Thou art no Man, tho of a Man's Complection,
For Men will kiss even by their own Direction.

This said, Impatience chokes her pleading Tongue,
And swelling Passion doth provoke a Pause;
Red Cheeks and fiery Eyes blaze forth her Wrong,
Being Judge in Love, she cannot right her Cause.
And now she weeps, and now she fain would speak,
And now her Sobs do her Intendments break.

Sometimes she shakes her Head, and then his Hand;
Now gazeth she on him, now on the Ground;
Sometimes her Arms infold him like a Band;
She would, he will not in her Arms be bound:
And when from thence he struggles to be gone,
She locks her Lilly Fingers one in one.

Fondling,
Venus and Adonis.

Fondling, faith she, since I have hem'd thee here;
Within the Circuit of this Ivory Pale,
I'll be the Park, and thou shalt be my Deer,
Feed where thou wilt, on Mountain or in Dale.
   Graze on my Lips; and if those Hills be dry,
Stray lower, where the pleasant Fountains lie.

Within this Limit is Relief enough,
Sweet bottom Grass, and high delightful Plain,
Round rising Hillocks, Brakes obscure and rough,
To shelter thee from Tempest and from Rain.
   Then be my Deer, since I am such a Park,
No Dog shall rouze thee, tho a thousand barks.

At this Adonis smiles, as in Disdain,
That in each Cheek appears a pretty Dimple;
Love made those Hollows, if himself were slain,
He might be buried in a Tomb so simple:
   Foreknowing well if there he came to lie,
Why there Love liv'd, and there he cou'd not die.

These loving Caves, these round enchanted Pits,
Open'd their Moutns to swallow Venus liking:
Being mad before, how doth she now for Wits?
Struck dead at first, what needs a second striking?
   Poor Queen of Love, in thine own Law forlorn,
To love a Cheek that smiles at thee with Scorn.

Now which way shall she turn? What shall she say?
Her Words are done, her Woes the more increasing:
The Time is spent, her Object will away,
And from her twining Arms doth urge-releasing.
   Pity, she cries, some Favour, some Remorse:
Away he springs, and hasteth to his Horse.

But, lo! from forth a Copps that neighbours by,
A breeding Jennet, lusty, young and proud,
Adonis' trampling Courser doth espy,
And forth she rushes, stoutly, and neighs aloud:
   The strong-neck'd Steed, being ty'd unto a Tree,
Breaketh his Rein, and to her straight goes he.

Imperiously.
Imperiously he leaps, he neighs, he bounds,
And now his woven Girts he breaks asunder;
The bearing Earth with his hard Hoof he wounds,
Whose hollow Womb resounds like Heaven's Thunder;
The Iron Bit he crushes 'tween his Teeth,
Controlling what he was controlled with.

His Ears up-prick'd, his braided hanging Mane
Upon his compass'd Crest, now stands an end:
His Nostrils drink the Air, and forth again,
As from a Furnace, Vapours doth he lend:
His Eye, which glisters scornfully like Fire,
Shews his hot Courage, and his high Desire.

Sometimes he trots, as if he told the Steps,
With gentle Majesty, and modest Pride:
Anon he rears upright, curvets and leaps,
As who should say, lo! thus my Strength is tried:
And thus I do to captivate the Eye
Of the fair Breeder that is standing by:

What recketh he his Rider's angry Stir,
His hatt'ring Holla, or his Stand, I say?
What cares he now for Curb, or pricking Spur?
For rich Caparisons, or Trappings gay?
He sees his Love, and nothing else he sees,
For nothing else with his proud Sight agrees.

Look, when a Painter would surpass the Life,
In limning out a well-proportion'd Steed,
His Art, with Nature's Workmanship at strife,
As if the Dead the Living should exceed:
So did his Horse excel a common one,
In Shape, in Courage, Colour, Pace and Bone.

Round-hoof, short-jointed, Fetlocks shag and long,
Broad Breast, full Eyes, small Head, and Nostril wide;
High Crest, short Ears, strait Legs, and passing strong,
Thin Mane, thick Tail, Broad Buttock, tender Hide.

Look,
Venus and Adonis.

Look, what a Horse should have, he did not lack,
Save a proud Rider on so proud a Back.

Sometimes he scuds far off, and there he flares;
Anon he starts at stirring of a Feather:
To bid the Wind a Base he now prepares,
And where he run, or fly, they know not whither.
For thro' his Mane and Tail the high Wind sings,
Fanning the Hairs, which heave like feather'd Wings.

He looks upon his Love, and neighs unto her;
She answers him, as if she knew his Mind:
Being proud, as Females are, to see him woo her,
She puts on outward Strangeness, seems unkind,
Spurns at his Love, and scorns the Heat he feels,
Beating his kind Embracements with her Heels.

Then, like a melancholy Malecontent,
He veils his Tail; that like a falling Plume,
Cool Shadow to his melting Buttocks lent;
He stamps and bites the poor Flies in his Fume:
His Love perceiving how he is enrag'd,
Grew kinder, and his Fury was assuag'd.

His teasing Master goes about to take him,
When lo! the unback'd Breeder, full of Fear,
Jealous of catching, swiftly doth forsake him,
With her the Horse, and left Adonis there.
As they were mad, unto the Wood they hie them,
Out-stripping Crows, that strive to over-fly them.

All swoln with chafing, down Adonis sits,
Banning his boist'rous and unruly Beast.
And now the happy Season once more sits,
That Love-sick Love, by pleading may be blest.
For Lovers say, the Heart hath treble Wrong,
When it is barr'd the Aidance of the Tongue.

An Oven, that is stop'd, or River staid,
Burneth more hotly, swelleth with more Rage:
Venus and Adonis.

So of concealed Sorrow may be said;
Free Vent of Words Love's Fire doth assuage:
But when the Heart's Attorney once is mute,
The Client breaks, as desperate in his Suit.

He sees her coming, and begins to glow,
Even as a dying Coal revives with Wind;
And with his Bonnet hides his angry Brow,
Looks on the dull Earth with disturbed Mind;
Taking no notice, that she is so nigh,
For all askance he holds her in his Eye.

O! what a Sight it was wistly to view
How she came stealing to the wayward Boy;
To note the fighting Conflict of her hue,
How White and Red each other did destroy!
But now her Cheek was pale, and by and by
It flash'd forth Fire, as Lightning from the Sky.

Now was she just before him, as he sat,
And like a lowly Lover down she kneels;
With one fair Hand she heaveth up his Hat,
Her other tender Hand his fair Cheeks feels:
His tender Cheeks receive her soft Hand's Print,
As apt, as new-fallen Snow takes any Dint.

O! what a War of Looks was then between them!
Her Eyes Petitioners to his Eyes suing:
His Eyes saw her Eyes, as they had had not seen them;
Her Eyes woo'd still, his Eyes disdain'd the Wooing:
And all this dumb Play had his Acts made plain,
With Tears, which Chorus-like her Eyes did rain.

Full gently now she takes him by the Hand,
A Lilly prison'd in a Jail of Snow,
Or Ivory in an Alabaster Band,
So white a Friend ingrants so white a Foe!
This beauteous Combat, wilful and unwilling,
Shew'd like to silver Doves, that fit a Billing.

Once
VENUS and ADONIS.

Once more the Engine of her Thoughts began:
O fairest Mover on this mortal Round!
Would thou wert, as I am, and I a Man,
My Heart all whole, as thine, thy Heart my Wound.
   For one sweet Look my Help I would assure thee,
  Tho' nothing but my Body's Bane would cure thee.

Give me my Hand (faith he) why dost thou feel it?
Give me thy Heart (faith she) and thou shalt have it.
O! give it me, left thy hard Heart do steel it;
And being steel'd, soft Sighs can never grave it:
   Then Love's deep Groans I never shall regard,
   Because Adonis' Heart hath made mine hard.

For shame, he cries, let go, and let me go,
My Day's Delight is past, my Horse is gone,
And 'tis your fault, I am bereft him so:
   I pray you hence, and leave me here alone.
   For all my Mind, my Thought, my busy Care,
   Is how to get my Palfrey from the Mare.

Thus she replies: Thy Palfrey, as he should,
Welcomes the warm Approach of sweet Desire:
Affection is a Coal, that must be cool'd;
Else, suffer'd, it will set the Heart on fire.
   The Sea hath Bounds, but deep Desire hath none;
   Therefore no marvel tho thy Horse be gone.

How like a Jade he stood, ty'd to a Tree,
Servilely mastr'd with a leathern Rein!
But when he saw his Love, his Youth's fair Fee,
He held such petty Bondage in disdain;
   Throwing the base Thong from his bending Crest
   Enfranchising his Mouth, his Back, his Breast.

Who sees his true Love in her naked Bed,
Teaching the Sheets a whiter Hue than white,
But when his glutton Eye so full hath fed,
His other Agents aim at like Delight?
   Who is so faint, that dare not be so bold
   To touch the Fire, the Weather being cold?

Let
Venus and Adonis.

Let me excuse thy Courser, gentle Boy,
And learn of him, I heartily beseech thee,
To take advantage on presented Joy;
Tho I were dumb, yet his Proceedings teach thee.

O! learn to love, the Lesson is but plain,
And once made perfect, never lost again.

I know not Love (quothe) nor will I know it,
Unless it be a Boar, and then I chase it;
'Tis much to borrow, and I will not owe it,
My Love to Love, is Love but to disgrace it;

For I have heard it is a Life in Death,
That laughs, and weeps, and all but in a Breath.

Who wears a Garment shapeless and unfinish'd?
Who plucks the Bud before one Leaf put forth?
If springing things be any jot diminish'd,
They wither in their prime, prove nothing worth.

The Colt that's back'd, and burden'd being young,
Loseth-his Pride, and never waxeth strong.

You hurt my Hand with wringing: Let us part,
And leave this idle Theme, this bootless Chat;
Remove your Siege from my unyielding Heart,
To Love's Alarm it will not ope the Gate.

Dismiss your Vows, your feigned Tears, your Flatt'ry;
For where a Heart is hard, they make no Batt'ry.

What! can't thou talk? (quothe) hast thou a Tongue?
O! would thou had'ft not, or I had no hearing!
Thy Mermaid's Voice hath done me double Wrong!
I had my Load before, now press'd with bearing.

Melodious Discord! heavenly Tune harsh-foundeing!
Earth's deep sweet Musick! and Heart's deep fore-

Had I no Eyes, but Ears, my Ears would love
That inward Beauty, and invisible:
Or were I deaf, thy outward Parts would move
Each part of me, that were but sensible.

Tho neither Eyes, nor Ears to hear nor see,
Yet should I be in love, by touching thee.
Venus and Adonis.

Say, that the Sense of Reason were bereft me,
And that I could not see, nor hear, nor touch;
And nothing but the very Smell were left me,
Yet would my Love to thee be still as much:
For from the Stillatory of thy Face excelling,
Comes Breath perfum’d, that breedeth Love by Smelling.

But oh! what Banquet wert thou to the Taste,
Being Nurse and Feeder of the other four!
Would they not with the Feast should ever last,
And bid Suspicion double-lock the Door;
Left Jealousy, that four unwelcome Guest,
Should by his stealing in disturb the Feast.

Once more the ruby-colour’d Portal open’d,
Which to his Speech did honey Passage yield;
Like a red Morn, that ever yet betoken’d,
Wreck to the Seamen, Tempest to the Field,
Sorrow to Shepherds, Woe unto the Birds,
Gust and foul Flaws to Herdmen and to Herds.

This ill Presage advisedly she marketh,
Even as the Wind is hush’d before it raineth,
Or as the Wolf doth grin before he barketh,
Or as the Berry breaks before it stainteth;
Or like the deadly Bullet of a Gun,
His Meaning struck her, ere his Words begun.

And at his Look she flatly falleth down;
For Looks kill Love, and Love by Looks reviveth:
A Smile recures the Wounding of a Frown,
But blessed Bankrupt, that by Love so thriveth!
The silly Boy believing she is dead,
Claps her pale Cheek, till clapping makes it Red.

And in amaze brake off his late Intent,
For sharply he did think to reprehend her,
Which cunning Love did wittily prevent,
Fair fall the Wit, that can so well defend her:
For on the Grass she lies, as she were slain,
Till his Breath breathed Life in her again.
Venus and Adonis.

He wrings her Nose, he strikes her on the Cheeks,
He bends her Fingers, holds her Pulses hard,
He chafes her Lips, a thousand ways he seeks
To mend the Hurt, that his Unkindness marr'd;
He kisses her, and she, by her good Will,
Would never rise, so he will kiss her still.

The Night of Sorrow now is turn'd to Day,
Her two blue Windows faintly the up-heaveth;
Like the fair Sun, when in his fresh Array,
He cheers the Morn, and all the World relievet:
And as the bright Sun glorifies the Sky,
So is her Face illumin'd with her Eye.

Whose Beams upon his hairless Face are fix'd,
As if from thence they borrow'd all their shine;
Were never four such Lamps together mix'd,
Had not his clouded, with his Brows repine.
But hers, which thro' the crystal Tears gave Light,
Shone like the Moon, in Water seen by Night.

O! where am I! (quoth she) in Earth, or Heaven!
Or in the Ocean drench'd! or in the Fire!
What Hour is this? or Morn, or weary Even?
Do I delight to die? or Life, desire?
But now I liv'd, and Life was Death's Annoy;
But now I dy'd, and Death was lively Joy.

O! thou didst kill me, kill me once again:
Thy Eyes, shrewd Tutor, that hard Heart of thine
Has taught them scornful Tricks, and such Disdain,
That they have murder'd this poor Heart of mine:
And these mine Eyes, true Leaders to their Queen,
But for thy piteous Lips no more had seen.

Long may they kiss each other for this Cure!
Oh never let their crimson Liveries wear!
And as they left, their Verdure still endure,
To drive Infection from the dangerous Year!
That the Star-gazers having writ on Death,
May say, the Plague is banish'd by thy Breath.
Venus and Adonis.

Pure Lips! sweet Seals! in my soft Lips imprinted,
What Bargains may I make still to be sealing?
To sell my self, I can be well contented,
So thou wilt buy, and pay, and use good Dealing:
Which Purchase if thou make, for fear of Slips,
Set thy Seal manual on my wax-red Lips.

A thousand Kisses buys my Heart from me,
And pay them at thy leisure one by one.
What is ten hundred Kisses unto thee?
Are they not quickly told, and quickly gone?
Say for Non-payment that the Debt should double,
Is twenty hundred Kisses such a trouble?

Fair Queen (quoth he) if any Love you owe me,
Measure my Strangeness with my unripe Years,
Before I know my self, seek not to know me.
No Fisher but the ungrown Fry forbears;
The mellow Plum doth fall, the green sticks fast,
Or being early pluck'd, is sure to taste.

Look, the World's Comforter, with weary Gate,
His Day's hot Task hath ended in the West!
The Owl (Night's Herald) shrieks, 'tis very late,
The Sheep are gone to Fold, Birds to their Nest:
The cole-black Clouds, that shadow Heaven's Light,
Do summon us to part, and bid Good-night.

Now let me say Good night, and so say you:
If you will say so, you shall have a Kiss.
Good-night (quoth she) and ere he says adieu,
The honey Fee of parting tendred is.
Her arms do lend his Neck a sweet Embrace,
Incorporate then they seem, Face grows to Face.

Till breathless he disjoin'd, and backward drew
The heavenly Misture, that sweet Coral Mouth,
Whose precious Taste her thirsty Lips well knew,
Whereon they surfeit, yet complain on Drowth:
He with her Plenty press'd, she faint with Dearth,
Their Lips together glu'd, fall to the Earth.
Venus and Adonis.

Now quick Desire hath caught her yielding Prey,
And Glutton-like she feeds, yet never filleth;
Her Lips are Conquerors, his Lips obey,
Paying what Ransom the Insulter willeth:
Whose Vultur Thought doth pitch the Prize so high;
That she will draw his Lips rich Treasure dry.

And having felt the Sweetness of the Spoil,
With blindfold Fury she begins to forage;
Her face doth reek and smoke, her Blood doth boil,
And careless Lust stirs up a desperate Courage:
Planting Oblivion, beating Reason back;
Forgetting Shame's pure Blush, and Honour's Wrack.

Hot, faint, and weary with her hard embracing,
Like a wild Bird being tam'd with too much handling,
Or as the fleet-foot Roe, that's tir'd with chasing,
Or like the sroward Infant still'd with dandling;
He now obeys, and now no more resifieth,
While she takes all she can, not all she lifteth.

What Wax so frozen, but dissolves with temp'ring?
And yields at last to every light Impression?
Things out of Hope are compass'd oft with vent'ring,
Chiefly in Love, whose Leave exceeds Commission.
Affection faints not, like a pale-fac'd Coward,
But then wooes best, when most his Choice is sroward.

When he did frown, O had she then gave over!
Such Nectar from his Lips she had not suck'd:
Foul Words and Frowns must not repel a Lover;
What tho the Rose have Pricks? yet it is pluck'd:
Were Beauty under twenty Locks kept fast,
Yet Love breaks thro', and picks them all at last.

For Pity now she can no more detain him;
The poor Fool prays her, that he may depart.
She is resolv'd no longer to restrain him,
Bids him farewell, and look well to her Heart;
The which by Cupid's Bow she doth protest,
He carries thence engag'd in his Breast.
Venus and Adonis.

Sweet Boy, she says, this Night I'll waste in Sorrow,
For my sick Heart commands mine Eyes to watch,
Tell me, Love's Master, shall we meet to-morrow?
Say, shall we, shall we, wilt thou make the Match?

He tells her no: to-morrow he intends
To hunt the Boar, with certain of his Friends.

The Boar! (quoth she) whereat a sudden Pale,
Like Lawn being spread upon the blushing Rose,
Usurps her Cheeks; she trembles at his Tale,
And on his Neck her yoking Arms she throws:
She sinketh down, still hanging on his Neck,
He on her Belly falls, she on her Back.

Now is she in the very Lifts of Love,
Her Champion mounted for the hot Encounter:
All is imaginary, she doth prove,
He will not manage her, altho he mount her:
That worse than Tantalus is her Annoy,
To clip Elysium, and to lack her Joy.

Even as poor Birds, deceiv'd with painted Grapes,
Do surfeit by the Eye, and pine the Maw:
Even so she languisheth in her Mifhaps,
As those poor Birds, that helpless Berries saw.

The warm Effects which she in him finds missing,
She seeks to kindle with continual Kissing,

But all in vain, good Queen, it will not be.
She hath assay'd as much, as may be prov'd,
Her pleading hath deserv'd a greater Fee:
She's Love, she loves, and yet she is not lov'd!

Fie, fie, he says, you crush me, let me go;
You have no reason to with-hold me so.

Thou hadst been gone (quoth she) Sweet Boy, ere this,
But that thou told'st me thou wouldst hunt the Boar:
Oh! be advis'd, thou know'st not what it is,
With Javelin's Point a churlish Swine to gore,
Whose Tushes never sheath'd, he whetteth still,
Like to a mortal Butcher, bent to kill.
Venus and Adonis.

On his Bow-back he hath a Battel set
Of brystly Pikes, that ever threat his Foes;
His Eyes, like Glow-worms, shine when he doth fret,
His Snout digs Sepulchres where-e'er he goes:
   Being mov'd, he strikes whate'er is in his way;
   And whom he strikes, his crooked Tuthes slay.

His brawny Sides, with hairy Bristles armed,
Are better Proof, than thy Spear's Point can enter;
His short thick Neck cannot be easily harmed;
Being irreful on the Lion he will venture.
   The thorny Brambles, and embracing Tuthes,
   As fearful of him, part, thro' whom he rusheth.

Alas! he nought esteems that Face of thine,
To which Love's Eye pays tributary Gazes;
Nor thy soft Hand, sweet Lips, and crystal Eyne,
Whose full Perfection all the World amazes;
   But having thee at vantage (wondrous Dread!)
   Would root these Beauties, as he roots the Mead.

O! let him keep his loathsome Cabin still!
Beauty hath nought to do with such foul Fiends,
Come not within his Danger by thy Will;
They that thrive well, take counsel of their Friends.
   When thou didst name the Boar, not to dissemble,
   I fear'd thy Fortune, and my Joints did tremble.

Didst thou not mark my Face? Was it not white?
Saw'st thou not Signs of Fear lurk in mine Eye?
Grew I not faint? And fell I not downright?
Within my Bosom, whereon thou dost lie,
   My boding Heart pants, beats, and takes no Rest,
   But like an Earthquake shakes thee on my Breast.

For where Love reigns, disturbing Jealousy
Doth call himself Affection's Centinel;
Gives false Alarms, suggesteth Mutiny,
And in a peaceful Hour doth cry, Kill, kill;
   Distempring gentle Love with his Desire,
   As Air and Water doth abate the Fire.
Venus and Adonis.

This four Informer, this bate-breeding Spy,
This Canker, that eats up Love's tender Spring,
This Carry-tale, diffident Jealousy,
That sometime true News, sometime false doth bring;
Knocks at my Heart, and whispers in mine Ear,
That if I love thee, I thy Death should fear.

And more than so, presenteth to mine Eye
The Picture of an angry chafing Boar,
Under whose sharp Fangs, on his Back doth lie
An Image like thy self, all stain'd with Gore;
Whole Blood upon the fresh Flowers being shed,
Doth make 'em drop with Grief, and hang the Head.

What should I do? seeing thee so indeed?
That trembling at th' Imagination,
The Thought of it doth make my faint Heart bleed,
And Fear doth teach it Divination.
I prophesy thy Death, my living Sorrow,
If. thou encounter with the Boar to-morrow.

But if thou needs will hunt, be rul'd by me,
Uncouple at the timorous flying Hare;
Or at the Fox, which lives by Subtilty;
Or at the Roe, which no Encounter dare:
Pursue these fearful Creatures o'er the Downs,
And on thy well-breath'd Horse keep with thy Hounds.

And when thou haft on foot the purblind Hare,
Mark the poor Wretch; to overshit his Troubles,
How he out-runs the Wind, and with what Care,
He cranks and crosses with a thousand Doubles.
The many Umfsits thro' the which he goes,
Are like a Labyrinth t' amaze his Foes.

Sometime he runs among the Flock of Sheep,
To make the cunning Hounds mistake their Smell;
And sometime where Earth-delving Conies keep,
To flop the loud Pursuers in their Yell;
And sometime forthwith with a Herd of Deer:
Danger deviseth Shifts, Wit waits on Fear.

For
For there his Smell with others being mingled,
The hot-scent-snuffing Hounds are driven to doubt,
Ceasing their clamorous Cry, till they have singled,
With much ado, the cold Fault cleanly out,
Then do they spend their Mouths; Ech'o replies,
As if another Chase were in the Skies.

By this poor Wat far off, upon a Hill,
Stands on his hinder Legs with listening Ear,
To hearken if his Foes pursue him still:
Anon their loud Alarums he doth hear,
And now his grief may be compared well
To one sore sick, that hears the passing Bell.

Then shalt thou see the dew-bedabred Wretch
Turn, and return, indenting with the Way:
Each envious Briar his weary Legs doth scratch,
Each Shadow makes him stop, each Murmur stay,
For Misery is trodden on by many;
And being low, never reliev'd by any.

Lie quietly and hear a little more,
Nay, do not struggle, for thou shalt not rise:
To make thee hate the hunting of the Boar,
Unlike my self, thou hear'st me moralize,
Applying this to that, and so to so;
For Love can comment upon every Woe.

Where did I leave? No matter where (quoth he)
Leave me, and then the Story aptly ends:
The Night is spent. Why, what of that? (quoth she)
I am (quoth he) expected of my Friends:
And now 'tis dark, and going I shall fall.
In Night (quoth she) Desire fees best of all.

But if thou fall, O! then imagine this,
The Earth in love with thee, thy Footing trips,
And all is but to rob thee of a Kiss.
Rich Preys make rich Men Thieves, so do thy Lips.
Make modest Dian cloudy and forlorn,
Left she should steal a Kiss, and die forsworn.
Venus and Adonis

Now of this dark Night I perceive the Reason,
Cynthia for Shame obscures her silver Shrine,
Till forging Nature be condemn'd of Treason,
For stealing Molds from Heaven, that were divine,
Wherein she fram'd thee in high Heaven's despite,
To shame the Sun by day, and her by night.

And therefore hath she brib'd the Destinies
To cross the curious Workmanship of Nature,
To mingle Beauty with Infirmities,
And pure Perfection with impure Defeature;
Making it subject to the Tyranny
Of sad Mischances and much Misery.

As burning Fever, Agues pale and faint,
Life-poisoning Pestilence, and Frenzies Wood,
The marrow-eating Sickness, whose Attaint
Disorder breeds by heating of the Blood:
Surfeits, Impothumes, Grief, and damn'd Despair,
Swear Nature's Death, for framing thee so fair.

And not the least of all these Maladies,
But in one minute's sight brings Beauty under:
Both Favour, Savour, Hue and Qualities,
Wherewith the imperial Gazer late did wonder,
Are on the sudden wasted, thaw'd, and done,
As mountain Snow melts with the mid-day Sun.

Therefore, despite of fruitless Chastity,
Love-lacking Vestals, and self-loving Nuns,
That on the Earth would breed a Scarcity,
And barren Death of Daughters and of Sons,
Be prodigal. The Lamp that burns by Night,
Dries up his Oil, to lend the World his Light.

What is thy Body, but a swallow'ing Grave,
Seeming to bury that Posterity,
Which by the Rights of Time thou needs must have,
If thou destroy them not in their Obscurity?
If so, the World will hold thee in disdain,
Sith in thy Pride so fair a Hope is slain.
Venus and Adonis

So in thy self thy self art made away,
A Mischief worse than civil home-bred Strife,
Or theirs, whose desperate Hands themselves do slay,
Or Butcher's Sire, that reaves his Son of Life.
   Foul cankering Rust the hidden Treasure frets;
   But Gold, that's put to use, more Gold begets.

Nay then, quoth Adon, you will fall again:
Into your idle over-handled Theam;
The Kiss I gave you is bestow'd in vain,
And all in vain you strive against the Stream.
   For by this blackfaced Night, Desire's soul Nurse;
   Your Treatise makes me like you worse and worse.

If Love hath lent you twenty thousand Tongues,
And every Tongue more moving than your own,
Bewitching like the wanton Mermaid's Songs,
Yet from mine Ear the tempting Tune is blown.
   For know, my Heart stands armed in my Ear,
   And will not let a false Sound enter there:

Left the deceiving Harmony should run
Into the quiet Closure of my Breast;
And then my little Heart were quite undone,
In his Bedchamber to be barr'd of Rest.
   No, Lady, no, my Heart longs not to groan,
   But soundly sleeps, while now it sleeps alone.

What have you urg'd, that I cannot reprove?
The Path is smooth, that leadeth unto Danger.
I hate not Love, but your Device in Love,
That lends Embracements unto every Stranger.
   You do it for Increase; O strange Excuse!
   When Reason is the bawd to Lust's Abuse.

Call it not Love, for Love to Heaven is fled,
Since sweating Lust on earth usurps his Name;
Under whose simple Semblance he hath fed
Upon fresh Beauty, blotting it with Blame:
   Which the hot Tyrant stains, and soon bereaves;
   As Caterpillars do the tender Leaves.

Love
Love comforteth like Sun-shine after Rain;
But Luft's Effect is Tempest after Sun:
Love's gentle Spring doth always fresh remain:
Luft's Winter comes, ere Summer half be done:
Love surfeits not; Luft like a glutton dies:
Love is all Truth; Luft full of forged Lyes.

More I could tell, but more I dare not say;
The Text is old, the Orator too green:
Therefore in Sadness now I will away,
My Face is full of Shame, my Heart of Teen:
Mine Ears, that to your wanton Calls attended,
Do burn themselves for having so offended.

With this, he breaketh from the sweet Embrace
Of those fair Arms, which bound him to her Breast:
And homeward thro' the dark Lanes runs apace;
Leaves Love upon her back deeply distress'd.
Look how a bright Star shooteth from the Sky,
So glides he in the Night from Venus' Eye.

Which after him she darts, as one on shore,
Gazing upon a late embarked Friend,
Till the wild Waves will have him seen no more,
Whose Ridges with the meeting Clouds contend:
So did the merciless and pitchy Night,
Fold in the Object, that did feed her Sight.

Whereat amaz'd, as one that unaware
Hath dropt a precious Jewel in the Flood;
Orstonish'd, as Night-Wanderers often are,
Their Light blown out in some mistrustful Wood:
Even so confounded in the dark she lay,
Having left the fair Discovery of her Way.

And now she beats her Heart, whereat it groans,
That all the neighbour Caves, as seeming troubled,
Make verbal Repetition of her Moans:
Passion on Passion deeply is redoubled.
Ay me! she cries, and twenty times, Woe! Woe!
And twenty Echo's twenty times cry so.
Venus and Adonis.

She marking them, begins a wailing Note,
And sings extemp'rally a woful Ditty:
How Love makes young Men thrall, and old Men dote;
How Love is wise in folly, foolish witty:
   Her heavy Anthem still concludes in Woe!
   And still the Choir of Echo's answers so.

Her Song was tedious, and out-wore the Night,
For Lovers Hours are long, tho seeming short:
If pleas'd themselves, others they think delight
In such-like Circumstance, with such-like Sport.
   Their copious Stories, oftentimes begun,
   End without Audience, and are never done.

For who hath she to spend the Night withal,
But idle Sounds, resembling Parasites?
Like shrill-tongu'd Tapsters answering every Call,
Soothing the Humour of fantastick Wits.
   She said, 'tis so: They answer all, 'tis so,
   And would say after her, if she said no.

Lo! here the gentle Lark, weary of Rest,
From his moist Cabinet mounts up on high,
And wakes the Morning, from whose silver Breast.
The Sun ariseth in his Majesty:
   Who doth the World so gloriously behold,
   The Cedar-Tops and Hills seem burnish'd Gold.

Venus salutes him with this fair Good-morrow:
O thou clear God, and Patron of all Light!
From whom each Lamp and flaming Star doth borrow
The beauteous Influence, that makes him bright:
   There lives a Son, that suck'd an earthy Mother,
   May lend thee Light, as thou dost lend to other,

This said, she hasteth to a myrtle Grove,
Musing the Morning is so much o'er-worn;
And yet she hears no Tidings of her Love:
She hearkens for his Hounds, and for his Horn;
   Anon she hears them chaunt it lustily,
   And all in haste she coasteth to the Cry.
Venus and Adonis.

And as she runs, the Bushes in the way,
Some catch her by the Neck, some kiss her Face,
Some twine about her Thigh, to make her stay;
She wildly breaketh from their strict Embrace,
Like a milch Doe, whose swelling Dugs do ake,
Hasting to feed her Fawn, hid in some Brake.

By this she hears the Hounds are at a bay,
Whereat she starts, like one that spies an Adder,
Wreath'd up in fatal Folds, just in his way,
The Fear whereof doth make him shake and shudder:
Ev'n so the timorous Yelping of the Hounds,
Appalls her Senses, and her Sp'rit confounds.

For now she knows it is no gentle Chase,
But the blunt Boar, rough Bear, or Lion proud;
Because the Cry remaineth in one place,
Where fearfully the Dogs exclaim aloud;
Finding their Enemy to be so curst,
They all strain Cust'fy who shall cope him first.

This dismal Cry rings sadly in her Ear,
Thro' which it enters, to surprize her Heart;
Who overcome by Doubt and bloodless Fear,
With cold pale Weakness numbs each feeling Part:
Like Soldiers, when their Captain once doth yield;
They basely fly, and dare not stay the Field.

Thus stands she in a trembling Extasy,
Till cheering up her Senses sore dismaid,
She tells them 'tis a causless Fantasy,
And childish Error, that they are afraid;
Bids them leave quaking, wills them fear no more:
And with that word, the spy'd the hunted Boar.

Whose frothy Mouth bepainted all with red,
Like Milk and Blood being mingled both together,
A second Fear thro' all her Sinews spread,
Which madly hurries her she knows not whither.
This way she runs, and now she will no further,
But back retires, to rate the Boar for Murder.
Venus and Adonis

A thousand Spleens bear her a thousand ways,
She treads the Paths that she untreads again;
Her more than Haste is marred with Delays:
Like the Proceedings of a drunken Brain,
    Full of Respect, yet not at all respecting;
In hand with all things, nought at all effecting.

Here kennel'd in a Brake, she finds an Hound,
And asks the weary Caitiff for his Master;
And there another licking of his Wound,
'Gainst venom'd Sores the only sovereign Plaister:
    And here she meets another sadly scolding,
To whom she speaks, and he replies with howling.

When he had ceas'd his ill-refounding Noise,
Another flap-mouth'd Mourner, black and grim,
Against the Welkin vollies out his Voice;
Another and another answer him,
    Clapping their proud Tails to the Ground below,
Shaking their scratcht Ears, bleeding as they go.

Look how the World's poor People are amaz'd
At Apparitions, Signs and Prodigies,
Whereon, with fearful Eyes, they long have gaz'd,
Infusing them with dreadful Prophecies:
    So she, at these sad Signs, draws up her Breath,
And sighing it again, exclaimed on Death.

Hard-favour'd Tyrant, ugly, meagre, lean,
Hateful Divorce of Love (thus chides the Death)
Grim-grinning Ghost, Earth's Worm, what dost thou mean?
To stifle Beauty, and to steal his Breath?
    Who when he liv'd, his Breath and Beauty set
Gloss on the Rose, Smell to the Violet.

If he be dead, O no! it cannot be!
Seeing his Beauty, thou shouldst strike at it.
O! yes, it may; thou hast no Eyes to see,
But hatefully at random dost thou hit.
    Thy Mark is feeble Age; but thy false Dart
Mistakes that Aim, and cleaves an Infant's Heart.

Hadst
Venus and Adonis.

Hadst thou but bid beware, then he had spoke,
And hearing him, thy Power had lost his Power.
The Destinies will curse thee for this Stroke,
They bid thee crop a Weed, thou pluck’st a Flower:
Love’s golden Arrow at him should have fled,
And not Death’s ebon Dart to strike him dead.

Doft thou drink Tears, that thou provok’st such weeping?
What may a heavy Groan advantage thee?
Why hast thou cast into eternal sleeping
Those Eyes, that taught all other Eyes to see?
Now Nature cares not for thy mortal Vigour,
Since her best Work is ruin’d with thy Rigour.

Here overcome, as one full of Despair,
She veil’d her Eye-lids, which like Sluices stop’d
The crytal Tide, that from her two Cheeks fair,
In the sweet Channel of her Bosom drop’d.
But thro’ the Flood-Gates breaks the silver Rain,
And with his strong Course opens them again.

O! how her Eyes and Tears did lend and borrow!
Her Eyes been in her Tears, Tears in her Eye;
Both Crystals, where they view’d each other’s Sorrow:
Sorrow, that friendly Sighs sought still to dry.
But like a stormy Day, now Wind, now Rain;
Sighs dry her Cheeks, Tears make them wet again.

Variable Passions throng her constant Woe,
As striving which should best become her Grief:
All entertain’d, each Passion labours so,
That every present Sorrow seemeth chief.
But none is best, then join they all together,
Like many Clouds consulting for foul Weather.

By this, far off, she hears some Huntsman hollow:
A Nurse’s Song ne’er pleas’d her Babe so well.
The dire Imagination she did follow,
This Sound of Hope doth labour to expel:
For now reviving Joy bids her rejoice,
And flatters her, it is Adonis’ Voice.

Whereat
Venus and Adonis

Whereat her Tears began to turn their Tide,
Being prison'd in her Eye, like Pearls in Glass:
Yet sometime falls an Orient Drop beside,
Which her Cheek melts, as scorn'ring it should pass
To wash the foul Face of the putrid Ground,
Who is but drunken when she seemeth drown'd.

O hard-believing Love! how strange it seems
Not to believe, and yet too credulous!
Thy Weal and Woe are both of them Extremes,
Despair and Hope make thee ridiculous!
   The one doth flatter thee in Thoughts unlikely,
   With likely Thoughts the other kills thee quickly.

Now she unweaves the Web that she had wrought,
Adonis lives, and Death is not to blame:
It was not she that call'd him all to nought,
Now she adds Honour to his hateful Name:
   She 'cleeps him King of Graves, and Grave for Kings,
   Imperial Supreme of mortal things.

No, no, (quoth she) sweet Death, I did but jest;
Yet pardon me, I felt, a kind of Fear,
When as I met the Boar, that bloody Beast,
Which knows no Pity, but is still severe.
   Then gentle Shadow (Truth I must confess)
   I rail'd on thee fearing my Love's Decease.

'Tis not my Fault: the Boar provok'd my Tongue;
Be wreak'd on him (invisible Commander!)
'Tis he, foul Creature; that hath done thee wrong,
I did but act, he's Author of thy Slander.
   Grief hath two Tongues, and never Woman yet
   Cou'd rule them both without ten Women's Wit.

Thus hoping that Adonis is alive,
Her rash Suspect she doth extenuate;
And that his Beauty may the better thrive,
With Death she humbly doth insinuate:
   Tells him of Trophies, Statues, Tombs, and Stories,
   His Victories, his Triumphs, and his Glories.
O Jove! quoth she, how much a Fool was I,
To be of such a weak and silly Mind,
To wail his Death, who lives, and must not die,
Till mutual Overthrow of mortal Kind!
   For he being dead, with him is Beauty slain,
   And Beauty dead, black Chaos comes again.

Eyes! eyes! fond Love, thou art so full of Fear,
As one with Treasure laden, hem'd with Thieves:
Trifles (unwitnessed with Eye or Ear)
Thy Coward Heart, with false bethinking grievances.
   Even at this word she hear's a merry Horn,
   Whereat she leaps, that was but late forlorn.

As Faulcon to the Lure, away she flies:
The Grass flys not, she treads on it so light,
And in her haste unfortunately spies
The foul Boar's Conquest on her fair Delight.
   Which seen, her Eyes, as murder'd with the View,
   Like Stars ashamed of Day, themselves withdrew.

Or as the Snail, whose tender Horns being hit,
Shrinks backward in his shelly Cave with Pain,
And there, all smother'd up, in Shade doth sit.
Long after fearing to creep forth again:
   So, at his bloody View her Eyes are fled
   Into the deep dark Cabins of her Head.

Where they resign'd their Office and their Light
To the disposing of her troubled Brain:
Who bids them still comfort with ugly Night,
And never wound the Heart with Looks again:
   Who like a King perplexed in his Throne,
   By their Suggestions gives a deadly Groan.

Whereat each Tributary Subject quakes,
As when the Wind, imprison'd in the Ground,
Struggling for Passage, Earth's Foundation shakes,
Which with cold Terrors doth Mens Minds confound.
   This Mutiny each part doth so surprize,
   That from their dark Beds, once more, leap her Eyes.
      And,
Venus and Adonis

And, being open'd, threw unwilling Sight
Upon the wide Wound, that the Boar had trench'd
In his soft Flank; whose wonted Lilly white
With purple Tears, that his Wound wept, was trench'd.
   No Flower was nigh, no Grass, Herb, Leaf, or Weed,
   But stole his Blood, and seem'd with him to bleed.

This solemn Sympathy poor Venus noteth,
Over one Shoulder doth she hang her Head;
Dumbly she passions, frantickly she doteth;
She thinks he could not die, he is not dead.
   Her Voice is stop'd, her Joints forget to bow,
   Her Eyes are mad, that they have wept till now.

Upon his Hurt she looks so steadfastly,
That her Sight dazling, makes the Wound seem three;
And then she reprehends her mangling Eye,
That makes more Gashes where no Breach should be:
   His Face seems twain, each several Limb is doubled,
   For oft the Eye mistakes, the Brain being troubled.

My Tongue cannot express my Grief for one;
And yet (quoth she) behold two Adons dead!
My Sighs are blown away, my wet Tears gone,
Mine Eyes are turn'd to Fire, my Heart to Lead:
   Heavy Hearts Lead melt at mine Eyes as Fire,
   So shall I die by Drops of hot Desire.

Alas! poor World, what Treasure haft thou lost!
What Face remains alive that's worth the viewing?
Whose Tongue is Musick now? what canst thou boast
Of things long since, or any thing ensuing?
   The Flowers are sweet, their Colours fresh and trim,
   But true sweet Beauty liv'd and dy'd in him.

Bonnet, or Veil, henceforth no Creature wear;
Nor Sun, nor Wind will ever strive to kiss you:
Having no Fair to lose, you need not fear;
The Sun doth scorn you, 'and the Wind doth hiss you.
   But when Adonis liv'd, Sun and sharp Air
Lurk'd like two Thieves, to rob him of his Fair.

And
And therefore wou’d he put his Bonnet on,
Under whose Brim the gaudy Sun wou’d peep;
The Wind wou’d blow it off, and being gone,
Play with his Locks, then wou’d Adonis weep:
And straight, in Pity of his tender Years,
They both wou’d strive who first shou’d dry his Tears.

To see his Face, the Lion walks along
Behind some, Hedge, because he wou’d not fear him;
To recreate himself when he hath sung,
The Tyger wou’d be tame, and gently hear him:
If he had spoke, the Wolf wou’d leave his Prey,
And never fright the silly Lamb that Day.

When he beheld his Shadow in a Brook,
There Fishes spread on it their golden Gills:
When he was by, the Birds such Pleasure took,
That some would sing, some other in their Bills
Would bring him Mulberries, and ripe red Cherries;
He fed them with his Sight, they him with Berries.

But this foul, grim, and urchin snouted Boar,
Whose downward Eye still looketh for a Grave,
No’er saw the beauteous Livery that he wore;
Witness the Entertainment that he gave.
If he did see his Face, why then I know,
He thought to kifs him, and hath kill’d him so.

’Tis true, true, true, thus was Adonis slain,
He ran upon the Boar with his sharp Spear,
Who wou’d not whet his Teeth at him again,
But by a Kifs thought to persuade him there:
And n’ouling in his Flank, the loving Swine
Sheath’d unaware his Tusk in his soft Groin.

Had I been tooth’d like him, I must confess,
With kissing him, I shou’d have kill’d him first.
But he is dead, and never did he bless
My Mouth with his; the more am I accurs’d.
With this she falleth in the Place she stood,
And stains her Face with his concealed Blood.

She
Venus and Adonis

She looks upon his Lips, and they are pale;
She takes him by the Hand, and that is cold;
She whispers in his Ear a heavy Tale,
As if he heard the woful Words she told:
She lifts the Coffer-lids that clofe his Eyes,
Where, lo! two Lamps burnt out in Darkness lies.

Two Glasses, where her self her self beheld
A thousand times, and now no more reflect;
Their Virtue lost, wherein they late exceld,
And every Beauty rob'd of his Effect.
Wonder of time! (quoth she) this is my Spight,
That, you being dead, the Day shou'd yet be light.

Since thou art dead, lo! here I prophesy
Sorrow on Love hereafter shall attend;
It shall be waited on with Jealousy,
Find sweet Beginning, but unsavoury End,
Ne'er settled equally to high or low;
That all Love's Pleasures shall not match his Woe.

It shall be fickle, false, and full of Fraud,
And shall be blasted in a breathing while,
The Bottom Poison, and the Top o'er-straw'd
With Sweets, that shall the sharpest Sight beguile.
The strongest Body shall it make most weak,
Strike the Wise dumb, and teach the Fool to speak.

It shall be sparing, and too full of Riot,
Teaching decrepit Age to tread the Meafures;
The daring Ruffian shall it keep in Quiet,
Pluck down the Rich, inrich the Poor with Treasures;
It shall be raging mad, and silly mild,
Make the Young Old, the Old become a Child.

It shall suspect, where is no Cause of Fear;
It shall not fear, where it should most mistrust;
It shall be merciful and too severe,
And most deceiving when it seems most just:
Perverse it shall be, when it seems most toward,
Put Fear to Valour, Courage to the Coward.
Venus and Adonis.

It shall be Cause of War and dire Events,
And set Diffusion 'twixt the Son and Sire;
Subject and servile to all Discontents,
As dry combustious Matter is to Fire.

Sith, in his Prime, Death doth my Love destroy,
They that love best their Love shall not enjoy.

By this the Boy that by her Side lay kill'd,
Was melted like a Vapour from her Sight,
And in his Blood, that on the Ground lay spill'd,
A purple Flower sprung up chequer'd with white,
Refembling well his pale Cheeks and the Blood,
Which in round Drops upon their Whiteness stood.

She bows her Head the new-sprung Flower to smell,
Comparing it to her Adonis' Breath:
And says, within her Bosom it shall dwell,
Since he himself is rest from her by Death:
She crops the Stalk, and in the Breach appears
Green dropping Sap, which she compares to Tears.

Poor Flower! (quoth she) this was thy Father's Guise,
(Sweet Issue of a more sweet-smelling Sire)
For every little Grief to wet his Eyes,
To grow unto himself was his Desire,
And so 'tis thine; but know it is as good
To wither in my Breast, as in his Blood.

Here was thy Father's Bed, here is my Breast,
Thou art the next of Blood, and 'tis thy Right;
Lo! in this hollow Cradle take thy Rest,
My throbbing Heart shall rock thee Day and Night:
There shall not be one Minute of an Hour,
Wherein I will not kiss my sweet Love's Flower.

Thus weary of the World, away she hies,
And yokes her silver Doves, by whose swift Aid,
Their Mistress mounted, thro' the empty Skies
In her light Chariot quickly is convey'd;
Holding their Course to Paphos, where their Queen
Means to immure her self, and not be seen.

TARQUIN
TARQUIN
AND
LUCRECE.
To the Right Honourable

Henry Wriothesly,

Earl of Southampton,

And

Baron of Tichfield.

Right Honourable,

The Love I dedicate to your Lordship, is without end: whereof this Pamphlet, without beginning, is but a superfluous Moiety. The warrant I have of your Honourable Disposition, not the Worth of my untutor'd Lines, makes
Epistle Dedicatory.

makes it assur'd of Acceptance. What I have done is yours, what I have to do is yours, being part in all I have devoted yours. Were my Worth greater, my Duty should shew greater: mean time, as it is, it is bound to your Lordship: To whom I wish long Life, still lengthen'd with all Happiness.

Your Lordship's in all Duty,

WILL. SHAKESPEAR.
The ARGUMENT.

LUCIUS Tarquinius (for his excessive Pride furnami'd Superbus) after he had caus'd his Father-in-Law, Servius Tullius, to be cruelly murder'd; and contrary to the Roman Laws and Customs, not requiring or staying for the People's Suffrages, had posses'd himself of the Kingdom; went, accompany'd with his Sons, and other Noblemen of Rome, to besiege Ardea. During which Siege, the principal Men of the Army meeting one Evening at the Tent of Sextus Tarquinius, the King's Son, in their Discourses after Supper, every one commended the Virtues of his own Wife; among whom Colatinus extol'd the incomparable Chastity of his Wife Lucrece. In that pleasant Humour they all posted to Rome; and intending, by their secret and sudden Arrival, to make trial of that which every one had before avouch'd: only Colatinus finds his Wife ( tho' it were late in the Night) spinning amongst her Maids, the other Ladies were found all Dancing and Revelling, or in several Dis-
The Argument.

ports. Whereupon the Noblemen yielded Caletinus the Victory, and his Wife the Fame. At that time, Sextus Tarquinius being inflam'd with Lucrece's Beauty, yet smothering his Passion for the present, departed with the rest back to the Camp; from whence he shortly after privily withdrew himself, and was (according to his State) royally entertain'd, and lodg'd by Lucrece at Colatium. The same Night, he treacherously stealing into her Chamber, violently ravish'd her; and early in the Morning speeded away. Lucrece, in this lamentable plight, hastily dispatcheth Messengers, one to Rome for her Father, another to the Camp for Colatine. They came, the one accompany'd with Junius Brutus, the other with Publius Valerius: and finding Lucrece attir'd in a mourning Habit, demanded the Cause of her Sorrow. She first taking an Oath of them for her Revenge, reveal'd the Actor, and whole matter of his Dealing, and withal suddenly stabb'd her self. Which done, with one Consent, they all vow'd to root out the whole hated Family of the Tarquins: And bearing the dead Body to Rome, Brutus acquainted the People with the Doer, and Manner of the vile Deed; with a bitter Inverse against the Tyranny of the King: wherewith the People were so mov'd, that with one Consent, and a general Acclamation, the Tarquins were all Exil'd, and the State-Government chang'd, from Kings to Consuls.
Tarquin and Lucrece.

ROM the besieg'd Ardea all in Post,
Borne by the trustless Wings of false
Desire,
Luft-breathing Tarquin leaves the Ro-
man Hofr,
And to Colatium bears the lightless Fire,
Which in pale Embers hid, lurks to aspire,
And girdle, with imbracing Flames, the Waste
Of Colatine's fair Love, Lucrece the chaste.

Haply that Name of Chaste, unhaply set
This batless Edge on his keen Appetite:
When Colatine unwisely did not let,
To praise the clear unmatched Red and White,
Which triumph'd in that Sky of his Delight;
Where mortal Star, as bright as Heaven's Beauties,
With pure Aspects did him peculiar Duties.
For he the Night before, in Tarquin's Tent,
Unlock'd the Treasure of his happy State:
What prizeless Wealth the Heavens had him lent,
In the possession of his beauteous Mate;
Reckoning his Fortune at so high a rate,
That Kings might be espoused to more Fame;
But King nor Prince to such a peerless Dame.

O Happiness enjoy'd but of a few!
And if possess'd, as soon decay'd and done!
As is the Morning's silver melting Dew,
Against the golden Splendor of the Sun;
A Date expir'd and cancel'd ere begun.
Honour and Beauty in the Owner's Arms,
Are weakly forrest from a world of Harms.

Beauty it self doth of it self persuade
The Eyes of Men without an Orator;
What needed then Apologies be made,
To set forth that which is so singular?
Or why is Colatine the Publisher
Of that rich Jewel he should keep unknown.
From thievish Cares, because it is his own?

Perchance his Boast of Lucrece' Sov'reignty
Suggested this proud Issue of a King;
For by our Ears our Hearts oft tainted be.
Perchance, that Envy of so rich a thing,
Braving compare, disdainfully did sting.
His high-pitcht Thoughts, that meaner Men should vant:
The Golden Hap, which their Superiors want.

But some untimely Thought did instigate
His all too timeless speed, if none of those.
His Honour, his Affairs, his Friends, his State,
Neglected all, with swift Intent he goes
To quench the Coal, which in his Liver glows.
O rash false Heat wrapt in repentant Cold!
Thy hafty Spring still blasts, and ne'er grows old.

When:
When at Colatium this false Lord arriv'd,
Well was he welcom'd by the Roman Dame,
Within whose Face Beauty and Virtue striv'd,
Which of them both should underprop her Fame.
When Virtue brag'd, Beauty would blush for shame;
When Beauty boasted Blushes, in despight,
Virtue would stain that o'er with silver White.

But Beauty, in that White intituled,
From Venus' Doves doth challenge that fair Field;
Then Virtue claims from Beauty Beauty's Red,
Which Virtue gave the golden Age to gild
Her silver Cheeks and call'd it then her Shield;
Teaching them thus to use it in the Fight,
When Shame assail'd, the Red should fence the White.

This Heraldry in Lucrece' Face was seen,
Argu'd by Beauty's Red and Virtue's White;
Of either's Colour was the other Queen,
Proving from World's Minority their Right;
Yet their Ambition makes them still to fight:
The Sov'reignty of either being so great;
That oft they interchange each other's Seat.

This silent War of Lillies and of Rofes,
Which Tarquin view'd in her fair Face's Field,
In their pure Ranks his Traitor Eye incloves,
Where, left between them both it should be kill'd.
The Coward Captive vanquished doth yield
To those two Armies, that would let him go,
Rather than triumph o'er so false a Foe.

Now thinks he, that her Husband's shallow Tongue,
The niggard Prodigal, that prais'd her so,
In that high Task hath done her Beauty wrong,
Which far exceeds his barren Skill to show.
Therefore that Praise, which Colatine doth owe,
Inchanted Tarquin answers with Surmise,
In silent Wonder of still gazing Eyes.
This earthly Saint, adored by this Devil,
Little suspected the false Worshipper.
For Thoughts unstain'd do seldom dream of Evil,
Birds never lim'd, no secrey Bushes fear.
So guiltless she securely gives good Cheap
And reverend Welcome to her Princely Guest,
Whose inward ill no outward Harm express'd.

For that he colour'd with his high Estate,
Hiding base Sin in Pleats of Majesty,
That nothing in him seem'd inordinate,
Save sometimes too much Wonder of his Eye:
Which having all, all could not satisfy;
But poorly rich so wanteth in his Store,
That cloy'd with much, he pineth still for more.

But she that never cop'd with stranger-Eyes,
Could pick no meaning from their parling Looks;
Nor read the subtil shining Secresies
Writ in the glassy Margents of such Books,
She touch'd no unknown Baits, nor fear'd no Hooks;
Nor could she moralize his wanton Sight
More, than his Eyes were open'd to the Light.

He tells to her Ears her Husband's Fame,
Won in the Fields of fruitful Italy;
And decks with Praisés Colatine's high Name,
Made glorious by his manly Chivalry,
With braised Arms and Wreaths of Victory.
Her Joy with heav'd-up Hand she doth express,
And wordless, so greets Heav'n for his Success.

Far from the purpose of his coming thither,
He makes Excuses for his being there;
No cloudy show of stormy blustering Weather,
Doth yet in his fair Welkin once appear,
Till fable Night, sad Source of Dread and Fear,
Upon the World dim Darkness doth display,
And in her vaulty Prison shufts the Day.
For then is Tarquin brought unto his Bed,
Intending Weariness with heavy Sprite;
For after Supper long he questioned
With modest Lucrece, and wore out the Night:
Now leaden Slumber with Life’s Strength doth fight,
And every one to rest themselves betake,
Save Thieves, and Cares, and troubled Minds that wakes.

As one of which, doth Tarquin lie revolving,
The sundry Dangers of his Will’s obtaining,
Yet ever to obtain his Will resolving,
Tho weak-built Hopes persuade him to abstaining,
Despair to gain doth traffick oft for gaining:
And when great Treasure is the Mead propos’d,
Tho Death be adjunct, there’s no Death suppos’d.

Those that much covet are of Gain so fond,
That oft they have not that, which they possess;
They scatter and unloose it from their Bond,
And so by hoping more, they have but less;
Or gaining more, the Profit of Excess
Is but to forfeit, and such Griefs sustain,
That they prove bankrupt in this poor, rich, Gain.

The Aim of all, is but to nurse the Life
With Honour, Wealth and Ease in waining Age:
And in this Aim there is such thwarting Strife,
That one for all, or all for one we gage:
As Life for Honour, in fell Battels rage,
Honour for Wealth, and oft that Wealth doth cost:
The Death of all, and altogether lost.

So that in venturing all, we leave to be
The things we are, for that which we expect:
And this Ambitious foul Insirmity,
In having much, torments us with Defect
Of that we have; so then we do neglect
The Thing we have, and, all for want of Wit,
Make something nothing, by augmenting it.
Such Hazard now must doting Tarquin make,
Bawning his Honour to obtain his Luft:
And for himself, himself he must forsake;
Then where is Truth, if there be no Self-trust?
When shall he think to find a Stranger just,
When he himself, himself confounds, betrays,
To slanderous Tongues the wretched hateful Lays?

Now stole upon the Time the Dead of Night,
When heavy Sleep had clos'd up mortal Eyes;
No comfortable Star did lend his Light,
No Noise but Owls, and Wolves Death-boding Cries:
Now serves the Seafon, that they may surprize
The silly Lambs; pure Thoughts are dead and still,
Whilst Luft and Murder wakes to stain and kill.

And now this luftful Lord leapt from his Bed,
Throwing his Mantle rudely o'er his Arm,
Is madly toss between Desire and Dread,
Th' one sweetly flatters, the other feareth harm;
But honest Fear, bewitch'd with Luft's foul Charm,
Doth too too oft betake him to retire,
Beaten away by brainsick rude Desire.

His Fauchion on a Flint he softly smiteth,
That from the cold Stone Sparks of Fire do fly,
Whereat a waxen Torch forthwith he lighteth,
Which must be Load-star to his luftful Eye:
And to the Flame thus speaks advisedly:

As from this cold Flint I enforc'd this Fire, 
So Lucrece must I force to my Desire.

Here pale with Fear, he doth premeditate,
The Dangers of his loathsome Enterprize;
And in his inward Mind he doth debate
What following Sorrow may on this arise:
Then looking scornfully he doth despise
His naked Armour of still slaughter'd Luft,
And justly thus controls his Thoughts unjust.
Tarquin and Lucrece. 107

Fair Torch burn out thy Light, and lend it not
To darken her, whose Light excelleth thine:
And die unhallow'd Thoughts, before you blot
With your Uncleanliness, that which is Divine.
Offer pure Incense to so pure a Shrine:
Let fair Humanity abhor the Deed,
That spots and stains Love's modest snow-white Weed.

O Shame to Knighthood, and to shining Arms!
O foul Dishonour to my Household's Grave!
O impious Act, including all foul Harms!
A martial Man to be soft Fancy's Slave!
True Valour still a true Respect should have.
Then my Digression is so vile, so base,
That it will live engraven in my Face.

Yes, tho I die; the Scandal will survive;
And be an Eye-fore in my Golden Coat:
Some loathsome Dash the Herald will contrive;
To cipher me how fondly I did dote:
That my Posterity shamed with the Note,
Shall curse my Bones, and hold it for no Sin,
To wish that I their Father had not been.

What win I, if I gain the thing I seek?
A Dream, a Breath, a Froth of fleeting Joy.
Who buys a Minute's Mirth, to wail a Week?
Or fells Eternity, to get a Toy?
For one sweet Grape, who will the Vine destroy?
Or what fond Beggar, but to touch the Crown,
Would with the Scepter strait be stricken down?

If Colatinus dream of my Intent,
Will he not wake, and in a desperate Rage,
Post hither, this vile Purpose to prevent?
This Siege, that hath ingirt his Marriage,
This Blur to Youth, this Sorrow to the Sage,
This dying Virtue, this surviving Shame,
Whose Crime will bear an ever-during Blames.
IO8 Tarquin and Lucrece.
O what Excuse can my Invention make,
When thou shalt charge me with so black a Deed!
Will not my Tongue be mute, my frail Joints shake?
Mine Eyes forgo their Light, my false Heart bleed?
The Guilt being great, the Fear doth still exceed,
And extreme Fear can neither fight nor fly,
But Coward-like with trembling Terror die.

Had Colatinus kill'd my Son or Sire,
Or lain in ambush to betray my Life;
Or were he not my dear Friend, this Desire
Might have excuse to work upon his Wife,
As in Revenge or Quital of such Strife:
But as he is my Kinsman, my dear Friend,
The Shame and Fault finds no Excuse nor End.

Shameful it is, if once the Fact be known;
Hateful it is; there is no Hate in loving.
I'll beg her Love; but she is not her own:
The worst is but Denial, and reproving.
My Will is strong, past Reason's weak removing.
Who fears a Sentence, or an old Man's Saw,
Shall by a painted Cloth be kept in awe.

Thus (graceless) holds he Disputation,
'Tween frozen Conscience and hot-burning Will;
And with good Thoughts makes Dispensation,
Urging the worser Sense for Vantage still:
Which in a moment doth confound and kill
All pure Effects, and doth so far proceed,
That what is vile shews like a virtuous Deed.

Quoth he, she took me kindly by the Hand,
And gaz'd for Tidings in my eager Eyes,
Fearing some bad News from the warlike Band,
Where her beloved Colatinus lies.
O how her Fear did make her Colour rise?
First, red as Roses, that on Lawn we lay,
Then white as Lawn, the Roses took away.

And
And now her Hand in my Hand being lock’d,  
Forc’d it to tremble with her loyal Fear:  
Which strook her sad, and then it faster rock’d,  
Until her Husband’s Welfare she did hear;  
Whereat she smiled with so sweet a Chear,  
That had Narcissus seen her as she stood,  
Self-love had never drown’d him in the Flood.

Why hunt I then for Colour or Excuses?  
All Orators are dumb, when Beauty pleads.  
Poor Wretches have remorse in poor Abuses;  
Love thrives not in the Heart, that Shadows dreads.  
Affection is my Captain, and he leads;  
And when his gaudy Banner is display’d,  
The Coward fights, and will not be dismay’d.

Then childish Fear avant! Debating die!  
Respect and Reason wait on wrinkled Age!  
My Heart shall never countermand mine Eye,  
Sad Pause and deep regard beseems the Sage;  
My part is Youth, and beats these from the Stage.  
Desire my Pilot is, Beauty my Prize;  
Then who fears sinking, where such Treasure lies?

As Corn o’er-grown by Weeds, so heedful Fear  
Is almost cloak’d by unrelifted Luft.  
Away he steals with open list’ning Ear,  
Full of foul Hope, and full of fond Mistrust:  
Both which, as Servitors to the Unjust,  
So cross him with their opposite Persuasion,  
That now he vows a League, and now Invasion.

Within his Thought her heavenly Image sits,  
And in the self-same Seat sits Catarine:  
That Eye which looks on her, confounds his Wits;  
That Eye which him beholds, as more Divine,  
Unto a View so false will not incline:  
But with a pure Appeal seeks to the Heart,  
Which once corrupted takes the worser part.

And
And therein heartens up his servile Powers,
Who flatter'd by their Leaders jocund show,
Stuffed up his Luft, as Minutes fill up Hours;
And as their Captain so their Pride doth grow,
Paying more slavish Tribute, than they owe.
By reprehensive Desire thus madly led,
The Roman Lord doth march to Lucrece's Bed.

The Locks between her Chamber and his Will,
Each one by him enforce'd, recites his Ward;
But as they open, they all rate his Ill,
Which drives the creeping Thief to some regard:
The Threshold grates the Door to have him heard;
Night-wandering Weezels shriek to see him there,
They fright him, yet he still pursues his fear.

As each unwilling Portal yields him way,
Thro' little Vents and Crannies of the Place,
The Wind wars with his Torch to make him stay,
And blows the Smoke of it into his Face,
Extinguishing his Conduct in this case.
But his hot Heart, which fond Desire doth scorch,
Puffs forth another Wind that fires the Torch.

And being lighted by the Light he spies
Lucretia's Glove, wherein the Needle sticks;
He takes it from the Rushes where it lies,
And gripping it, the Needle his Finger pricks:
As who should say, this Glove to wanton Tricks
Is not inured; return again in haste,
Thou seest our Mistresses' Ornaments are chaste.

But all these poor forbiddings could not stay him,
He in the worst sense construes their Denial:
The Doors, the Wind, the Glove, that did delay him,
He takes for accidental Things of Trial,
Or as these Bars, which stop the hourly Dial,
Which with a lingering Stay his Course doth let,
Till every Minute pays the Hour his Debt.
So, so, quoth he, these Let's attend the Time,
Like little Frosts, that sometime threat the Spring,
To add a more rejoicing to the Prime,
And give the sheaped Birds more cause to sing.
Pain pays the Income of each precious thing; (Sands,
Huge Rocks, high Winds, strong Pirates, Shelves and
The Merchant fears, ere rich at home he lands.

Now is he come unto the Chamber-Door,
That shuts him from the Heaven of his Thought,
Which with a yielding Latch, and with no more,
Hath barr’d him from the blessed thing he sought.
So from himself Impiety hath wrought;
That for his Prey to pray he doth begin,
As if the Heavens should countenance his Sin.

But in the midst of his unfruitful Prayer,
Having solicited th’ Eternal Power,
That his foul Thoughts might compass his fair Fairy,
And they would stand auspicious to the Hour;
Even there he starts, quoth he, I must deflour!
The Powers to whom I pray, abhor this Fact.
How can they then assist me in the Act?

Then Love and Fortune be my Gods, my Guide;
My Will is back’d with Resolution:
Thoughts are but Dreams till their Effects be try’d,
Black Sin is clear’d with Absolution;
Against Love’s Fire, Fear’s Frost hath Dissolution.
The Eye of Heaven is out, and misty Night
Covers the Shame, that follows sweet Delight.

This said, the guilty Hand pluck’d up the Latch,
And with his Knee the Door he opens wide;
The Dove sleeps fast, that this Night-Owl will catch:
Thus Treason works ere Traitors be esp’y’d.
Who sees the lurking Serpent, steps aside;
But she found sleeping, fearing no such thing,
Lies at the Mercy of his mortal Sting.
Into the Chamber wickedly he stalks,
And gazeth on her yet unstained Bed:
The Curtains being close, about he walks,
Rolling his greedy Eye-balls in his Head,
By their high Treason in his Heart mislaid;
Which gives the Watch-word to his Hand too soon,
To draw the Cloud that hides the silver Moon.

Look as the fair and fiery pointed Sun,
Rushing from forth a Cloud, bereaves our Sight;
Even so the Curtain drawn, his Eyes begun
To wink, being blinded with a greater Light:
Whether it is, that she reflects so bright,
That dazleth them, or else some Shame suppos'd;
But blind they are, and keep themselves inclos'd.

O had they in that darksome Prison died!
Then had they seen the Period of their Ill;
Then Colatine again by Lucrece' Side,
In his clear Bed might have repos'd still.
But they must ope, this blessed League to kill;
And holy-thoughted Lucrece, to their Sight
Must tell her Joy, her Life, her World's Delight.

Her lilly Hand her rosy Cheeks lies under,
Cozening the Pillow of a lawful Kiss;
Which therefore angry, seems to part in sunder,
Swelling on either Side to want his Bliss:
Between whose Hills, her Head intombed is;
Where like a virtuous Monument she lies,
To be admir'd of leud unhallow'd Eyes.

Without the Bed her other fair Hand was,
On the green Coverlet, whose perfect White
Shew'd like an April Dazy on the Gras's,
With pearly Sweat, resembling Dew of Night.
Her Eyes like Marigolds had sheath'd their Light,
And canopy'd in Darkness sweetly lay,
Till they might open to adorn the Day.
Tarquin and Lucrece. 113

Her Hair like golden Threads plaid with her Breath;
O modest Wantons, wanton Modesty!
Showing Life's Triumph in the Map of Death,
And Death's dim Look in Life's Mortality.
Each in her Sleep themselves so beautify,
As if between them twain there were no Strife,
But that Life liv'd in Death, and Death in Life.

Her Breasts like Ivory Globes circled with Blue,
A pair of maiden Worlds unconquered:
Save of their Lord, no bearing Yoke they knew,
And him by Oath they truly honoured.
These Worlds in Tarquin, new Ambition bred,
Who like a foul Usurper went about,
From this fair Throne to have the Owner out.

What could he see, but mightily he noted?
What did he note, but strongly he desir'd?
What he beheld, on that he firmly doted,
And in his Will his wilful Eye he tir'd.
With more than Admiration he admir'd
Her Azure Veins, her Alabaster Skin,
Her Coral Lips, her Snow-white dimpled Chin.

As the grim Lion fawneth o'er his Prey,
Sharp Hunger by the Conquest satisfy'd:
So o'er this sleeping Soul doth Tarquin stay,
His Rage of Lust by gazing quality'd,
Slack'd, not suppress'd; for standing by her Side,
His Eye which late this Mutiny restrains,
Unto a greater Uproar tempts his Veins.

And they, like straggling Slaves for Pillage fighting,
Obdurate Vassals, fell Exploits effecting,
In bloody Death and Ravishment delighting,
Nor Childrens Tears, nor Mothers Groans respecting,
Swell in their Pride, the Onset still expecting.
Anon his beating Heart alarum striking,
Gives the hot Charge, and bids them do their liking.

His
His drumming Heart cheers up his burning Eye:
His Eye commends the leading to his Hand;
His Hand, as proud of such a Dignity,
Smoaking with Pride, march'd on to make his Stand.
On her bare Breasts, the Heart of all her Land;
Whose Ranks of blue Veins, as his Hand did scale,
Left their round Turrets destitute and pale.

They must ring to the quiet Cabinet,
Where their dear Governess and Lady lies.
Do tell her she is dreadfully beset,
And fright her with Confusion of their Cries.
She much amaz'd, breaks ope her lock'd-up Eyes;
  Who peeping forth, this Tumult to behold,
  Are by his flaming Torch dim'd and controul'd.

Imagine her as one in dead of Night,
Forth from dull Sleep by dreadful Fancy waking,
That thinks she has beheld some ghastly Sprite,
Whose grim Aspect sets every Joint a shaking;
What Terror 'tis: but she in worser taking,
  From Sleep disturbed, heedfully doth view.
  The Sight, which makes suppos'd Terror rue.

Wraipt and confounded in a thousand Fears,
Like to a new-kill'd Bird she trembling lies:
She dares not look, yet winking there appear
Quick shifting Anticks ugly in her Eyes,
Such Shadows are the weak Brain's Forgeries;
  Who angry that the Eyes fly from their Lights,
  In Darkness daunts them with more dreadful Sights:

His Hand, that yet remains upon her Breast,
(Rude Ram! to batter such an Ivory Wall)
May feel her Heart (poor Citizen!) distress'd,
Wounding it self to death, rise up and fall,
Beating her Bulk, that his Hand shakes withal.
This moves in him more Rage, and lesser Pity,
To make the Breach, and enter this sweet City.

First
Tarquin and Lucrece. 115

First like a Trumpet doth his Tongue begin
To sound a Parley to his heartless Foe,
Who o'er the white Sheet peers her whiter Chin.
The Reason of this Alarum to know,
Which he by dumb Demeanor seeks to show;
But she with vehemost Prayers urgeth still,
Under what Colour he commits this Ill.

Thus he replies: The Colour in thy Face,
That even for Anger makes the Lilly pale,
And the red Rose blush at her own Disgrace.
Shall plead for me, and tell my loving Tale.
Under that Colour am I come to scale
Thy never-conquer'd Fort, the Fault is thine.
For those thine Eyes betray thee unto mine.

Thus I forestall thee, if thou mean to chide:
Thy Beauty hath insnarl'd thee to this Night,
Where thou with Patience must my Will abide.
My Will, that marks thee for my Earth's Delight,
Which I to conquer fought with all my Might.
But as Reproof and Reason beat it dead,
By thy bright Beauty it was newly bred.

I see what Crosses my Attempts will bring;
I know what Thorns the growing Rose defends;
I think the Honey guarded with a Sting.
All this before-hand Counsel comprehends;
But Will is deaf, and hears no heedful Friends.
Only he hath an Eye to gaze on Beauty,
And dotes on what he looks, 'gainst Law or Duty.

I have debated, even in my Soul,
What Wrong, what Shame, what Sorrow I shall breed;
But nothing can Affection's Course controul,
Or stop the headlong Fury of his Speed.
I know repentant Tears infuse the Deed,
Reproach, Disdain, and deadly Enmity;
Yet strive I to imbrace mine Infamy.

This:
Tarquin and Lucrece.

This said, he shakes aloft his Roman blade,
Which like a Faulcon tow'ring in the Skies,
Coucheth the Fowl below with his Wings Shade,
Whose crooked Beak threats, if he mount he dies:
So under his insulting Fauchion lies
Harmless Lucretia, marking what he tells,
With trembling Fear, as Fowls hear Faulcon's Bells.

Lucrece, quoth he, this Night I must enjoy thee,
If thou deny, then Force must work my way;
For in thy Bed I purpose to destroy thee;
That done, some worthless Slave of thine I'll slay,
To kill thine Honour with thy Life's Decay,
And in thy dead Arms do I mean to place him,
Swearing I slew him, seeing thee embrace him.

So thy surviving Husband shall remain
The scornful Mark of every open Eye;
Thy Kinsmen hang their Heads at this Disdain,
Thy issue blur'd with nameless Bastardy;
And thou the Author of their Obloquy,
Shalt have thy Trespass cired up in Rhimes,
And sung by Children in succeeding Times.

But if thou yield, I rest thy secret Friend,
The Fault unknown is as a Thought unacted;
A little Harm done to a great good End,
For lawful Policy remains enacted.
The poisonous Simple sometimes is compacted
In purest Compounds; being so apply'd,
His Venom in effect is purify'd.

Then for thy Husband, and thy Childrens sake,
Tender my Suir, bequeath not to their Lot
The Shame, that from them no Device can take,
The Blemish that will never be forgot,
Worse than a flavish Wipe, or birth-hour's Blot:
For Marks describ'd in Mens Nativity,
Are Nature's Faults, not their own Infamy.

Here
Tarquin and Lucrece. 117

Here with a Cockatrice dead-killing Eye,
He rouseth up himself, and makes a Pause;
While she, the Picture of true Piety,
Like a white Hind beneath the Gripe's sharp Claws,
Pleads in a Wilderness, where are no Laws,
To the rough Beast, that knows no gentle Right,
Nor ought obeys but his foul Appetite.

As when a blackface'd Cloud the World does threat,
In his dim Mist th' aspiring Mountain hiding,
From Earth's dark Womb some gentle Gust does get,
Which blow these pitchy Vapours from their biding,
Hindring their present Fall by this dividing:
So his unhallow'd haft his Words delays,
And moody Pluto winks, while Orpheus plays.

Like soul night-waking Cat he doth but dally,
While in his hold-fast Foot the weak Mouse panteth;
Her sad Behaviour feeds his Vulture Folly,
A swallowing Gulf, that e'en in Plenty wanteth;
His Ear her Prayers admits, but his Heart granteth
No penetrable Entrance to her plaining;
Tears harden Luft, tho Marble wears with raining.

Her pity-pleading Eyes are sadly fix'd
In the remorseful Wrinkles of his Face:
Her modest Eloquence with Sighs is mix'd,
Which to her Oratory adds more Grace.
She puts the Period often from his Place,
And midst the Sentence so her Accent breaks,
That twice she doth begin, ere once she speaks.

She conjures him by high Almighty Jove,
By Knighthood, Gentry, and sweet Friendship's Oath;
By her untimely Tears, her Husband's Love;
By holy human Law, and common Troth;
By Heaven and Earth, and all the Power of both;
That to his borrow'd Bed he make retire,
And stoop to Honour, not to foul Desire.

Quoth
Quoth she, reward not Hospitality
With such black Payment as thou hast pretended;
Mud not the Fountain that gave Drink to thee,
Mar not the thing that cannot be amended:
End thy ill Aim, before thy Shoot be ended.
He is no Wood-man, that doth bend his Bow,
To strike a poor unseasonable Doe.

My Husband is thy Friend, for his sake spare me;
Thy self art mighty, for thy own sake leave me;
My self a Weakling, do not then inflame me;
Thou look'st not like Deceit, do not deceive me;
My Sighs like Whirlwinds labour hence to heave thee.
If ever Man was mov'd with Woman's Moans,
Be moved with my Tears, my Sighs, my Groans.

All which together, like a troubled Ocean,
Beat at thy rocky and wreck-threatening Heart,
To soften it with their continual Motion;
For Stones dissolved to Water do convert.
O! if no harder than a Stone thou art,
Melt at my Tears, and be compassionate!
Soft Pity enters at an Iron Gate.

In Tarquin's Likeness I did entertain thee,
Haft thou put on his Shape to do him shame?
To all the Host of Heaven I complain thee;
Thou wrong'dst his Honour, wound'st his Princely Name:
Thou art not what thou seem'st; and if the same,
Thou seem'st not what thou art, a God, a King;
For Kings, like Gods, should govern everything.

How will thy Shame be seeded in thine Age,
When thus thy Vices bud before thy Spring?
If in thy Hope thou dar'st do such Outrage,
What dar'st thou not, when once thou art a King?
O! be remembred, no outrageous thing
From Vassal Actors can be wip'd away,
Then Kings Misdeeds cannot be hid in Clay.

This
This Deed shall make thee only lov'd for Fear,
But happy Monarchs still are fear'd for Love:
With foul Offenders thou perforce must bear,
When they in thee the like Offences prove:
If but for fear of this, thy Will remove.
For Princes are the Glas, the School, the Book,
Where Subjects Eyes do learn, do read, do look.

And wilt thou be the School where Lust shall learn?
Must he in thee read Lectures of such Shame?
Wilt thou be Glas, wherein it shall discern
Authority for Sin, Warrant for Blame?
To privilege Dishonour in thy Name,
Thou back'ft Reproach against long-living Laud,
And mak'ft fair Reputation but a Bawd.

Hast thou commanded? By him that gave it thee,
From a pure Heart command thy rebel Will;
Draw not thy Sword to guard Iniquity,
For it was lent thee all that Brood to kill.
Thy Princely Office how canst thou fulfill,
When pattern'd by thy Fault, foul Sin may say,
He learnt to sin, and thou didn't teach the way?

Think but how vile a Spectacle it were,
To view thy present Trespasses in another:
Mens Faults do seldom to themselves appear,
Their own Transgressions partially they smother:
This Guilt would seem death-worthy in thy Brother.
O! how are they wrapt in with Infamies,
That from their own Misdeeds askance their Eyes!

To thee, to thee, my heav'd up Hands appeal,
Not to seducing Lust's outrageous Fire;
I sue for exil'd Majesty's Repeal,
Let him return and flattering Thoughts retire.
His true Respect will prison false Desire,
And wipe the dim Mist from thy doting Eyne,
That thou shalt see thy State and pity mine.
Have done, quoth he, my uncontrouled Tide
Turns not, but swells the higher by this Let;
Small Lights are soon blown out, huge Fires abide,
And with the Wind in greater Fury fret:
The petty Streams that pay a daily Debt
To their fall Sovereign with their fresh false haft,
Add to his Flow, but alter not the Taste.

Thou art (quoth she) a Sea, a Sovereign King,
And lo! there falls into thy boundless Flood
Black Luft, Dishonour, Shame, Misgoverning,
Who seek to stain the Ocean of thy Blood.
If all these petty Ills should change thy Good,
Thy Sea within a puddle Womb is burst,
And not the Puddle in thy Sea dispers'd.

So shall these Slaves be King, and thou their Slave;
Thou nobly base, they basely dignified;
Thou their fair Life, and they thy fouler Grave;
Thou loathed in thy Shame, they in thy Pride:
The leffer thing should not the greater hide.
The Cedar floops not to the base Shrub's Foot,
But low Shrubs wither at the Cedar's Root.

So let thy Thoughts low Vassals to thy State.—
No more, quoth he, by Heav'n I will not hear thee:
Yield to my Love; if not, enforced Hate,
Instead of Love's coy touch, shall rudely tear thee:
That done, despitely I mean to bear thee
Unto the base Bed of some Rascal Groom,
To be thy Partner in this shameful Doom.

This said, he sets his Foot upon the Light,
For Light and Luft are deadly Enemies:
Shame folded up in blind concealing Night,
When most unseen, then most doth tyrannize.
The Wolf has seiz'd his Prey, the poor Lamb cries,
Till with her own white Fleece her Voice controul'd,
Intombs her Outcry in her Lips sweet Fold.

For
TARQUIN and LUCRECE. 121

For with the nightly Linen, that she wears,
He pens her piteous Clamours in her Head,
Cooling his hot Face in the chasteest Tears,
That ever modest Eyes with Sorrow shed.
O that foul Lust should stain so pure a Bed!
The Spots whereof, could Weeping purify,
Her Tears should drop on them perpetually.

But she hath lost a dearer thing than Life,
And he hath won what he would lose again;
This forced League doth force a further Strife,
This momentary Joy breeds Months of Pain,
This hot Desire converts to cold Disdain.
Pure Chastity is rifled of her Store,
And Lust, the Thief, far poorer than before.

Look as the full-fed Hound or gorged Hawk,
Unapt for tender Smell, or speedy Flight,
Make slow pursuit, or altogether balk
The Prey wherein by Nature they delight:
So surfeit-taking Tarquin fears this Night;
His Taste delicious, in Digestion souring,
Devours his Will, that liv’d by foul devouring.

O! deeper Sin, than bottomless Conceit
Can comprehend in still Imagination!
Drunken Desire, must vomit his Recept,
Ere he can see his own Abomination.
While Lust is in his Pride, no Exclamation
Can curb his Heat, or rein his rash Desire,
Till, like a Jade, Self-will himself doth tire.

And then with lank and lean discolor’d Cheek,
With heavy Eye, knit Brow, and strengthless Pace,
Feeble Desire all recreant, poor and meek,
Like to a Bankrupt Beggar wails his Case:
The Flesh being proud, Desire does fight with Grace.
For there it revels, and when that decays,
The guilty Rebel for Remission prays.

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Tarquin and Lucrece.

So fares it with this fault-ful Lord of Rome,
Who this Accomplishment so hotly chas’d;
For now against himself he founds this Doom,
That thro’ the length of time he stands disgrac’d:
Besides, his Soul’s fair Temple is defac’d;
To whose weak Ruins muster Troops of Cares,
To ask the Spotted Princess how she fares.

She says, her Subjects with soul Insurrection
Have batter’d down her consecrated Wall,
And by their mortal Fault brought in Subjection
Her Immortality, and made her thrall
To living Death, and Pain perpetual:
Which in her Presence she controul’d still,
But her Foresight could not fore-stall their Will.

E’en in this Thought thro’ the dark Night he stealeth,
A Captive Victor, that hath lost in Gain:
Bearing away the Wound, that nothing healeth,
The Scar that will, despite of Cure, remain:
Leaving his Spoil perplex’d in greater Pain.
She bears the Load of Lust he left behind,
And he the Burden of a guilt Mind.

He like a thievish Dog creeps sadly thence,
She like a weary’d Lamb lies panting there:
He scowls and hates himself for his Offence,
She desperate, with her Nails her Flesh doth tear:
He faintly flies, sweating with guilty Fear:
She stays exclaming on the direful Night,
He runs and chides his vanish’d loath’d Delight.

He thence departs a heavy Convertite;
She there remains a hopeless Cast-away:
He in his speed looks for the Morning-Light;
She prays she never may behold the Day:
For Day (quoth she) Night-Scapes doth open lay;
And my true Eyes have never prais’d how
To cloke Offences with a cunning Brow.
Tarquin and Lucrece. 123

They think not but that every Eye can see
The same Disgrace, which they themselves behold;
And therefore would they still in Darkness lie,
To have their unseen Sin remain untold.
For they their Guilt with weeping will unfold,
   And grave, like Water that doth eat in Steel,
Upon their Cheeks what helpless Shame they feel.

Here she exclaims against Repose and Rest,
And bids her Eyes hereafter still be blind;
She wakes her Heart, by beating on her Breast,
And bids it leap from thence, where it may find
Some purer Chest to close so pure a Mind.
   Frantick with Grief, thus breathes she forth her Spight
   Against the unseen Secrecy of Night.

O comfort-killing Night! Image of Hell!
Dim Register! and Notary of Shame!
Black Stage for Tragedies! and Murders fell!
Vast Sin-concealing Chaos! Nurse of Blame!
Blind muffled Bawd! dark Harbour of Defame!
   Grim Cave of Death! whispering Conspirator
   With close-tongued Treason and the Ravisher!

O hateful, vaporous, and foggy Night!
Since thou art guilty of my cureless Crime,
Muster thy Mist to meet the Eastern Light,
Make war against proportion'd Course of time:
Or if thou wilt permit the Sun to climb
   His wonted height, yet ere he go to bed,
Knit poisonous Clouds about his golden Head.

With rotten Damps ravish the morning Air,
Let their exhal'd unwholesom Breaths make sick
The Life of Purity, the supreme Fair,
Ere he arrive his weary Noon-tide Prick:
And let thy misty Vapours march so thick,
   That in their smoky Ranks his smother'd Light
May set at Noon, and make perpetual Night.
124 Tarquin and Lucrece.

Were Tarquin Night, as he is but Night's Child,  
The silver-shining Queen him would disdain;  
Her twinkling Handmaids too (by him defil'd)  
Thro' Night's black Bofom should not peep again.  
So should I have Copartners in my Pain:  
And Fellowship in Woe doth Woe assuage,  
As Palmers, that make short their Pilgrimage.

Where now? have I no one to blush with me?  
To cross their Arms, and hang their Heads with mine;  
To mask their Brows, and hide their Infamy.  
But I alone, alone must sit and pine;  
Seasoning the Earth with Showers of silver Brine;  
Mingling my Talk with Tears, my Grief with Groans,  
Poor waiting Monuments of lasting Moans.

O Night! thou Furnace of soul-recking Smoke!  
Let not the jealous Day behold that Face,  
Which underneath thy black all-hiding Cloke  
Immodestly lies martyr'd with Disgrace.  
Keep still possession of thy gloomy Place,  
That all the Faults, which in thy Reign are made,  
May likewise be sepulchred in thy Shade.

Make me not Object to the tell-tale Day;  
The Light shall shew, character'd in my Brow,  
The Story of sweet Chastity's Decay,  
The impious Breach of holy Wedlock's Vow.  
Yea, the illiterate, that know not how  
To cipher what is writ in learned Books,  
Will quote my loathsome Trespass in my Looks.

The Nurse, to still her Child, will tell my Story,  
And fright her crying Babe with Tarquin's Name:  
The Orator, to deck his Oratory,  
Will couple my Reproach to Tarquin's Shame.  
Feast-finding Minstrels, tuning my Defame,  
Will tye the Heavers to attend each Line,  
How Tarquin wronged me, I Colatine.

Let
Let my good Name, that senseless Reputation,
For Colatine's dear Love be kept unspotted;
If that be made a Theme for Disputation,
The Branches of another Root are rotted,
And undeserv'd Reproach to him allotted,
That is as clear from this Attaint of mine,
As I, ere this, was pure to Colatine.

O unseen Shame! invisible Disgrace!
O unfelt Sore! crest-wounding private Scar!
Reproach is stamp'd in Colatinus' Face,
And Tarquin's Eye may read the Mote afar,
How he in Peace is wounded, not in War.
Alas! how many bear such shamefull Blows,
Which not themselves, but he that gives them, knows?

If, Colatine, thine Honour lay in me,
From me, by strong Assault, it is bereft:
My Honey lost, and I a Drone-like Bee,
Have no Perfection of my Summer left,
But robb'd and ranstuck'd by injurious Theft:
In thy weak Hive a wandering Wasp hath crept
And suck'd the Honey which thy chaste Bee kept.

Yet am I guilty of thy Honour's Wreck?
Yet for thy Honour did I entertain him;
Coming from thee, I could not put him back,
For it had been Dishonour to disdain him.
Besides, of Weariness he did complain him,
And talk'd of Virtue: O unlook'd for Evil!
When Virtue is profan'd in such a Devil!

Why should the Worm intrude the maiden Bud?
Or hateful Cuckows hatch in Sparrows Nefts?
Or Toads infect fair Founts with venom Mud?
Or tyrant Folly lurk in gentle Breasts?
Or Kings be Breakers of their own Behests?
But no Perfection is so absolute,
That some Impurity doth not pollute.
Tarquin and Lucrece.

The aged Man, that cofers up his Gold,
Is plagu'd with Cramps, and Gouts, and painful Fits;
And scarce hath Eyes his Treasure to behold:
But still like pining Tantalus he sits,
And uselesss bans the Harvest of his Wits.

Having no other Pleasure of his Gain,
But Torment, that it cannot cure his Pain.

So then he hath it, when he cannot use it,
And leaves it to be master'd by his Young,
Who in their Pride do presently abuse it:
Their Father was too weak, and they too strong.
To hold their cursed blessed Fortune long.

The Sweats we wish for, turn to loathed Sours,
E'en in the moment that we call them ours.

Unruly Blasts wait on the tender Spring;
Unwholesom Weeds take root with precious Flowers;
The Adder hisseth where the sweet Birds sing;
What Virtue breeds, Iniquity devours:
We have no Good, that we can say is ours.

But ill-annexed Opportunity,
Or kills his Life, or else his Quality.

O! Opportunity! thy Guilt is great:
'Tis thou that execut'ft the Traitor's Treason:
Thou set'ft the Wolf where he the Lamb may get.
Whoever plots the Sin, thou point'ft the Season;
'Tis thou that spurn'ft at Right, at Law, at Reason:
And in thy shady Cell, where none may spy her,
Sits Sin, to seize the Souls that wander by her.

Thou mak'ft the Vestal violate her Oath;
Thou blow'ft the Fire, when Temperance is thaw'd;
Thou smother'ft Honesty, thou murder'ft Truth:
Thou foul Abettor, thou notorious Bawd!
Thou plantest Scandal, and displac'est Laud.

Thou Ravisher, thou Traitor, thou false Thief!
Thy Honey turns to Gall, thy Joy to Grief.

Thy
Tarquin and Lucrece. 127

Thy secret Pleasure turns to open Shame;
Thy private Feasting to a publick Fast;
Thy smothering Titles to a ragged Name;
Thy sugar'd Tongue to bitter Wormwood Taste:
Thy violent Vanities can never last.

How comes it then, vile Opportunity,
Being so bad, such Numbers seek for thee?

When wilt thou be the humble Suppliant’s Friend?
And bring him where his Suit may be obtain’d?
When wilt thou set an Hour, great Strifes to end?
Or free that Soul, which Wretchedness hath chain’d?
Give Physick to the Sick, Ease to the Pain’d?

The Poor, Lame, Blind, halt, creep, cry out for thee,
But they ne’er met with Opportunity.

The Patient dies, while the Physician sleeps;
The Orphan pines, while the Oppressor feeds;
Justice is feasting, while the Widow weeps;
Advice is sporting, while Infection breeds;
Thou grant’st no time for charitable Deeds.

Wrath, Envy, Treason, Rape and Murder rages,
Thy heinous Hours wait on them as their Pages.

When Truth and Virtue have to do with thee,
A thousand Crosses keep them from thy Aid;
They buy thy Help: but Sin ne’er gives a Fee,
He gratis comes, and thou art well apaid,
As well to hear, as grant what he hath said.

My Colatine would else have come to me,
When Tarquin did, but he was staid by thee.

Guilty thou art of Murder and of Theft;
Guilty of Perjury and Subornation;
Guilty of Treason, Forgery and Shift;
Guilty of Incest, that Abomination:
An Accessary by thine Inclination
To all Sins past, and all that are to come,
From the Creation to the general Doom.
Mishapen Time, Copesmate of ugly Night;
Swift subtle Polt, Carrier of gristy Care;
Eater of Youth, false Slave to false Delight,
Base Watch of Woes, Sin's Pack-horse, Virtue's Snare;
Thou nurseth all, and murderest all that are.

O hear me then, injurious shifting Time!
Be guilty of my Death, since of my Crime.

Why hath thy Servant Opportunity,
Betray'd the Hours thou gavst me to repose?
Cancel'd my Fortunes, and inchained me
To endless Date of never-ending Woes?
Time's Office is to find the Hate of Foes,
To eat up Error by Opinion bred,
Not spend the Dowry of a lawful Bed.

Time's Glory is to calm contending Kings;
To unmask Falseness, and bring Truth to light;
To stamp the Seal of Time on aged things;
To wake the Morn, and sentinel the Night;
To wrong the Wronger, till he render Right;
To ruinate proud Buildings with thy Hours,
And smear with Dust their glittering golden Towers:

To fill with Worm-holes stately Monuments;
To feed Oblivion with Decay of things;
To blot old Books, and alter their Contents;
To pluck the Quills from antient Ravens Wings;
To dry the old Oak's Sap, and cherish Springs;
To spoil Antiquities of hammer'd Steel,
And turn the giddy Round of Fortune's Wheel:

To shew the Beldame Daughters of her Daughter;
To make the Child a Man, the Man a Child;
To slay the Tyger, that doth live by Slaughter;
To tame the Unicorn and Lion wild;
To mock the Subtle in themselves beguil'd;
To chear the Plowman with increaseful Crops,
And waste huge Stones with little Water-drops.
Why work'lt thou mischief in thy Pilgrimage,
Unless thou could'lt return to make amends?
One poor retiring Minute, in an Age,
Would purchase thee a thousand thousand Friends.
Lending him Wit, that to bad Debtors lends.
    O! this dread Night! would'lt thou one Hour come back,
    I could prevent this Storm, and shun this Wrack.
Thou ceaseless Lackey to Eternity.
With some Mischance cross Tarquin in his flight;
Devise Extremes beyond Extremity,
To make him curse this cursed crimeful Night:
Let ghastly Shadows his lewd Eyes affright,
    And the dire Thought of his committed Evil Shape every Bush a hideous shapeless Devil.
Disturb his Hours of Rest with restless Tances;
Afflict him in his Bed, with Bed-rid Groans:
Let there bechance him pitiful Mischances,
To make him moan, but pity not his Moans:
Stone him with harden'd Hearts, harder than Stones:
    And let mild Women to him lose their Mildness,
    Wilder to him than Tygers in their Wildness.
Let him have time to tear his curled Hair;
Let him have time against himself to rave;
Let him have time of Time's Help to despair;
Let him have time to live a loathed Slave;
Let him have time a Beggar's Orts to crave,
    And time to see one, that by Alms does live,
    Disdain to him disdained Scraps to give.
Let him have time to see his Friends his Foes,
And merry Fools to mock at him resort:
Let him have time to mark how slow Time goes:
In time of Sorrow, and how swift and short
His time of Folly, and his time of Sport:
    And ever let his unrecalling Time
    Have time to wail th' abusing of his Time.
130 Tarquin and Lucrece.

O! Time! thou Tutor both to Good and Bad!
Teach me to curse him, that thou taught'st this Ill;
At his own Shadow let the Thief run mad,
Himself, himself seek every hour to kill;
Such wretched Hands such wretched Blood should spill!
   For who so base would such an Office have,
   As slanderous Death's-man to so base a Slave?

The baser is he, coming from a King,
To shame his Hope with Deeds degenerate;
The mightier Man, the mightier is the Thing,
That makes him honour'd, or begets him Hate:
For greatest Scandal waits on greatest State.
   The Moon being clouded, presently is mist,
   But little Stars may hide them when they lift.

The Crow may bathe his cole-black Wings in Mire,
And unperceiv'd fly with the Filth away;
But if the like the snow-white Swan desire,
The Stain upon his silver Down will stay.
Poor Grooms are sightles Night, Kings glorious Day,
   Gnats are unnoted wheresoe'er they fly,
   But Eagles gaz'd upon with every Eye.

O idle Words! Servants to shallow Fools;
Unprofitable Sounds, weak Arbitrators;
Buy your selves in skill-contending Schools:
Debate where Leisure serves, with dull Debators:
To trembling Clients be their Mediators.
   For me, I force not Argument a straw,
   Since that my Cafe is past all Help of Law.

In vain I rail at Opportunity,
At Time, at Tarquin, and unfearchful Night!
In vain I cavil with mine Infamy,
In vain I spurn at my confirm'd Despight:
This helpless Smoke of Words doth me no Right.
   The Remedy indeed to do me good,
   Is to let forth my soul desfiled Blood.

Poor
Poor Hand, why quiver'st thou at this Decree?
Honour thy self, to rid me of this Shame;
For if I die, my Honour lives in thee:
But if I live, thou livest in my Defame;
Since thou could'st not defend thy loyal Dame,
    And wert afraid to scratch her wicked Foe,
    Kill both thy self, and her for yielding so.

This said, from her betummed Couch she starts,
To find some desperate Instrument of Death.
But this no Slaughter-house, no Tool imparts,
To make more Vent for Passage of her Breath,
Which thronging thro' her Lips so vanisheth,
    As Smoke from Ætna, that in Air consumes,
    Or that which from discharged Cannon fumes.

In vain (quoth she) I live, and seek in vain
Some happy Mean, to end a hapless Life:
I fear'd by Tarquin's Fauchion to be slain,
Yet for the self-same purpose seek a Knife:
But when I fear'd, I was a loyal Wife;
    So am I now: O no! that cannot be;
    Of that true Type hath Tarquin rifled me.

O! that is gone, for which I sought to live,
And therefore now I need not fear to die;
To clear this Spot by Death (at least) I give
A Badge of Fame to Slander's Livery,
A dying Life to living Infamy!
    Poor helpless Help, the Treasure stole'n away;
    To burn the guiltless Casket where it lay.

Well, well, dear Colatine, thou shalt not know
The stained Taste of violated Truth;
I will not wrong thy true Affection so,
To flatter thee with an infringed Oath:
This baffard Grafs shall never come to Growth;
    He shall not boast, who did thy Stock pollute,
    That thou art doting Father of his Fruit.
Nor shall he smile at thee in secret Thought,
Nor laugh with his Companions at thy State;
But thou shalt know thy Interest was not bought
Basely with Gold, but stol'n from forth thy Gate:
For me, I am the Mistress of my Fate,
And with my Trespasses never will dispense,
Till Life to Death acquit my first Offence.

I will not poison thee with my Attaint,
Nor fold my Fault in cleanly coin'd Excuses;
My Fable Ground of Sin I will not pain,
To hide the Truth of this false Night's Abuses:
My Tongue shall utter all, mine Eyes like Sluices,
As from a mountain Spring, that feeds a Dale,
Shall gush pure Streams, to purge my impure Tale.

By this, lamenting Philomel had ended—
The well-tun'd Warble of her nightly Sorrow;
And solemn Night with slow sad Gate descended
To ugly Hell; when lo! the blushing Morrow
Lends Light to all fair Eyes, that Light would borrow.

But cloudy Lucrece shames her self to see,
And therefore still in Night would cloister'd be.

Revealing Day thro' every Cranny spies,
And seems to point her out where she sits weeping;
To whom the sobbing speaks! O! Eye of Eyes!
Why pry'st thou thro' my Window? Leave thy peeping
Mock with thy tickling Beams, Eyes that are sleeping:
Brand not my Forehead with thy piercing Light,
For Day hath nought to do what's done by Night.

Thus cavils she with every thing she sees:
True Grief is fond, and teasty as a Child,
Who way-ward once, his Mood with nought agrees;
Old Woes, not infant Sorrows bear them mild;
Continuance tames the one, the other wild,
Like an unpractis'd Swimmer, plunging still,
With too much Labour, drowns for want of Skill.
So he deep drench'd in a Sea of Care,
Holds Disputation with each thing she views;
And to her self all Sorrow doth compare;
No Object but her Passion's Strength renews,
And as one shifts, another strait ensues:
Sometimes her Grief is dumb, and hath no Words;
Sometimes 'tis mad, and too much Talk affords.

The little Birds, that tune their Morning's Joy,
Make her Moans mad, with their sweet Melody.
For Mirth doth search the bottom of Annoy;
Sad Souls are slain in merry Company;
Grief best is pleas'd with grief's Society.
True Sorrow then is feelingly surpriz'd,
When with like Semblance it is sympathiz'd.

'Tis double Death to drown in ken of Shore;
He ten times pines, that pines beholding Food:
To see the Salve, doth make the Wound ake more;
Great Grief grieves most at that will do it good;
Deep Woes roll forward, like a gentle Flood,
Which being stop'd, the bounding Banks overflows;
Grief dally'd with, nor Law, nor Limit knows.

You mocking Birds, quoth she, your Tunes intomb
Within your hollow-swelling feather'd Breasts;
And in my hearing be you ever dumb,
My restless Discord loves no Stops nor Rests:
A woeful Hostess brooks not merry Guests.
Relish your nimble Notes to pleasing Ears,
Distress liketh Dumps, when time is kept with Tears.

Come Philomel, that sing'st of Ravishment,
Make thy sad Grove in my dishevel'd Hair.
As the dank Earth weeps at thy Languishment,
So I at each sad Strain will strain my Tear,
And with deep Groans the Diapason bear:
For Burden-wive I'll hum on Tarquin still,
While thou on Terens descants better Skill.
And while against a Thorn thou bear'st thy Part,
To keep thy sharp Woes waking; wretched I,
To imitate thee well, against my Heart
Will fix a sharp Knife, to affright mine Eye,
Who if it wink, shall thereon fall and die.
These Means, as Frets upon an Instrument,
Shall tune our Heart-strings to true Languishment.

And for, poor Bird, thou sing'st not in the Day,
As shaming any Eye should thee behold;
Some dark deep Desert seat'd from the Way,
That knows nor parching Heat, nor freezing Cold,
We will find out; and there we will unfold
To Creatures stern, sad Tunes to change their Kinds;
Since Men prove Beasts, let Beasts bear gentle Minds.

As the poor frightened Deer, that stands at gaze,
Wildly determining which way to fly;
Or one compass'd with a winding Maze,
That cannot tread the Way out readily:
So with her self is she in mutiny,
To live or die, which of the twain were better,
When Life is sham'd, and Death reproaches Debtor.

To kill my self, quoth she, alack! what were it,
But with my Body my poor Soul's Pollution?
They that lose half, with greater patience bear it,
Than they whose Whole is swallow'd in Confusion.
That Mother tries a merciful's Conclusion,
Who having two sweet Babes, when Death takes one,
Will slay the other, and be Nurse to none.

My Body or my Soul, which was the dearer?
When the one pure, the other made divine,
Whose Love of either to my self was nearer,
When both were kept from Heaven and Colaine?
Aye me! the Bark peal'd from the lofty Pine,
His Leaves will wither, and his Sap decay;
So must my Soul, her Bark being peal'd away.
Tarquin and Lucrece. 135

Her House is sack'd, her Quiet interrupted;
Her Mansion batter'd by the Enemy;
Her sacred Temple spotted, spoil'd, corrupted,
Grossly ingirt with daring Infamy.
Then let it not be call'd Impiety,
If in this blemish'd Fort I make some hole,
Thro' which I may convey this troubled Soul.

Yet die I will not, till my Colatine
Have heard the Cause of my untimely Death;
That he may vow, in that sad Hour of mine,
Revenge on him, that made me stop my Breath:
My stained Blood to Tarquin I bequeath,
Which by him tainted, shall for him be spent,
And as his due, writ in my Testament.

My Honour I'll bequeath unto the Knife,
That wounds my Body so dishonoured:
'Tis Honour to deprive dishonoured Life:
The one will live, the other being dead.
So of Shame's Ashes shall my Fame be bred;
For in my Death I murder shameful Scorn,
My Shame so dead, my Honour is now born.

Dear Lord of that dear Jewel I have lost,
What Legacy shall I bequeath to thee?
My Resolution, Love, shall be thy Boast,
By whose Example thou reveng'd mayst be.
How Tarquin must be us'd, read it in me:
My self thy Friend, will kill my self thy Foe;
And for my sake, serve thou false Tarquin so.

This brief Abridgment of my Will I make:
My Soul and Body to the Skies and Ground;
My Resolution (Husband) do you take;
My Honour be the Knife's, that makes my Wound;
My Shame be his, that did my Fame confound;
And all my Fame that lives, disbursed be
To those that live, and think no Shame of me.
Tarquin and Lucrece

When Colatine shall oversee this Will,
How was I overseen, that thou shalt see it?
My Blood shall wash the Slander of mine Ill;
My Life's foul Deed, my Life's fair End shall free it.
Faint not, faint Heart, but stoutly say, So be it:
Yield to my Hand, and that shall conquer thee;
Thou dead, that dies, and both shall Victors be.

This Plot of Death, when sadly she had laid,
And wip'd the brinish Pearl from her bright Eyes,
With untun'd Tongue she hoarsly call'd her Maid,
Whose swift Obedience to her Mistress hies,
For fleet-wing'd Duty with Thought's Feathers flies.
Poor Lucrece' Cheeks unto her Maid seem so,
As Winter Meads, when Sun does melt their Snow.

Her Mistress she doth give demure Good-morrow,
With soft slow Tongue, true Mark of Modesty;
And sorts a sad Look to her Lady's Sorrow.
(For why, her Face wore Sorrow's Livery)
But durst not ask of her audaciously,
Why her two Suns were cloud-eclipsed so;
Nor why her fair Cheeks over-wash'd with Woe.

But as the Earth doth weep, the Sun being set,
Each Flower moist'en'd like a melting Eye;
E'en so the Maid with swelling Drops 'gan wet.
Her circled Eyne, enforc'd by Sympathy
Of those fair Suns set in her Mistress' Sky;
Who in a salt-wav'd Ocean quench their Light,
Which makes the Maid weep like the dewy Night.

A pretty while these pretty Creatures stand,
Like ivory Conduits coral Cisterns filling;
One justly weeps, the other takes in hand
No Cause, but Company of her Drops spilling:
Their gentle Sex to weep are often willing;
Grieving themselves to griefs at other Smarts;
And then they drown their Eyes, or break their Hearts.
For Men have marble, Women waxen Minds,
And therefore they are form'd as Marble will:
The Weak oppress'd, th' Impression of strange kinds
Is form'd in them by Force, by Fraud, or Skill.
Then call them not the Authors of their Ill,
No more than Wax shall be accounted evil,
Wherein is stamp'd the Semblance of a Devil.

Their Smoothness, like an even champain Plain,
Lays open all the little Worms that creep.
In Men, as in a rough-grown Grove, remain
Cave-keeping Evils, that obscurely sleep:
Thro' Crystal Walls each little Mote will peep.
Tho' Men can cover Crimes with bold stern Looks,
Poor Womens Faces are their own Faults Books.

No Man inveighs against the wither'd Flower,
But chides rough Winter, that the Flower has kill'd:
Not that's devour'd, but that which doth devour,
Is worthy Blame: O let it not be held
Poor Womens faults that they are so fulfill'd
With Mens Abuses; those proud Lords, to blame,
Make weak mad Women Tenants to their Shame.

The Precedent whereof in Lucrece view,
Affail'd by Night with Circumstances strong
Of present Death, and Shame that might ensue,
By that her Death to do her Husband wrong;
Such Danger to Resistance did belong.
The dying Fear thro' all her Body spread,
And who cannot abuse a Body dead?

By this mild Patience did fair Lucrece speak
To the poor Counterfeit of her complaining:
My Girl, quoth she, on what occasion break
Thos' Tears from thee, that down thy Cheeks are rain-
If thou dost weep for Grief of my sustaining,
Know, gentle Wench, it small avails my Mood;
If Tears could help, mine own would do me good.

But
But tell me, Girl, when went (and there she staid,
Till after a deep Groan) Tarquin from hence?
Madam, ere I was up (reply'd the Maid)
The more to blame, my sluggard Negligence:
Yet with the Fault I thus far can dispense;
My self was stirring ere the Break of Day,
And ere I rose, was Tarquin gone away.

But Lady, if your Maid may be so bold,
She would request to know your Heaviness.
O peace (quothe Lucrece) if it should be told,
The Repetition cannot make it less;
For more it is, than I can well express:
And that deep Torture may be call'd a Hell,
When more is felt than one hath power to tell.

Go, get me hither Paper, Ink, and Pen;
Yet save that labour, for I have them here.
(What should I say?) One of my Husband's Men
Bid thou be ready, by and by to bear
A Letter to my Lord, my Love, my Dear;
Bid him with speed prepare to carry it,
The Cause craves haste, and it will soon be writ.

Her Maid is gone, and she prepares to write,
First hovering o'er the Paper with her Quill;
Conceit and Grief an eager Combat fight,
What Wit sets down, is blotted still with Will;
This is too curious good, this blunt and ill:
Much like a Press of People at a door,
Throng her Inventions, which shall go before:

At last she thus begins: Thou worthy Lord
Of that unworthy Wife, that greeteth thee,
Health to thy Person; next vouchsafe t'afford
(If ever, Love, thy Lucrece thou wilt see)
Some present speed to come and visit me:
So I commend me from our House in Grief,
My Woes are tedious, tho' my Words are brief.

Here
Tarquin and Lucrece. 139

Here folds she up the Tenor of her Woe,
Her certain Sorrow writ uncertainly:
By this short Schedule Colatine may know
Her Grief, but not her Grief's true Quality:
She dares not therefore make Discovery,
Left he should hold it her own gross Abuse,
Ere she with Blood had stain'd her strain'd Excuse.

Besides the Life and Feeling of her Passion,
She hoards to spend, when he is by to hear her;
When Sighs, and Groans, and Tears may grace the
fashion
Of her Disgrace, the better so to clear her
From that Suspicion which the World might bear her:
To shun this Blot, she wou'd not blot the Letter
With Words, till Action might become them better.

To see sad Sights, moves more than hear them told;
For then the Eye interprets to the Ear
The heavy Motion that it doth behold;
When every Part a part of Woe doth bear,
'Tis but a part of Sorrow that we hear.

Deep Sounds make leffer noise than shallow Fords,
And Sorrow ebbs, being blown with Wind of Words.

Her Letter now is seal'd, and on it writ,
At Ardea to my Lord with more than Haste;
The Post attends, and she delivers it,
Charging the four-fac'd Groom to hie as fast,
As lagging Souls before the Northern Blast.
Speed, more than Speed, but dull and slow she deems,
Extremity still urgeth such Extremes.

The homely Villain curtseys to her low,
And blushing on her with a steadfast Eye,
Receives the Scroll without or Yea or No;
For outward bashful Innocence doth flie.
But they whose Guilt within their Bofoms lie,
Imagine every Eye beholds their Blame,
For Lucrece thought he blush'd to see her Shame.
140 Tarquin and Lucrece.

When sily Groom (God wot) it was defect
Of Spirit, Life, and bold Audacity;
Such harmless Creatures have a true Respect
To talk in Deeds, while others faucily
Promise more Speed, but do it leisurely.
Even so this Pattern of the worn-out Age
Pawn'd honest Looks, but laid no words to gage:

His kindled Duty kindled her Mistrust,
That two red Fires in both their Faces blaz'd.
She thought he blush'd as knowing Tarquin's Luft,
And blushing with him, wistly on him gaz'd,
Her earnest Eye did make him more amaz'd:
  The more she saw the Blood his Cheeks replenish,
  The more she thought he spy'd in her some blemish.

But long she thinks till he return again,
And yet the duteous Vassal scarce is gone;
The weary Time she cannot entertain,
For now tis stale to sigh, to weep, and groan.
So Wo hath wearied Wo, Moan tired Moan,
  That she her Plaints a little while doth stay,
  Pausing for Means to mourn some newer way.

At last she calls to mind where hangs a Piece
Of skilful Painting made for Priam's Troy;
Before the which is drawn the Power of Greece,
For Helen's Rape the City to destroy,
Threatening cloud-kissing Ilion with Annoy;
  Which the conceited Painter drew so proud,
  As Heaven (it seem'd) to kiss the Turrets bow'd,

A thousand lamentable Objects there,
In scorn of Nature, Art gave lifeless Life;
Many a dire Drop seem'd a weeping Tear,
Shed for the slaughter'd Husband by the Wife.
The red Blood reek'd to shew the Painter's Strife.
  And dying Eyes gleem'd forth their ashy Lights,
  Like dying Coals burnt out in tedious Nights.

There
There might you see the labouring Pioneer
Begrim'd with Sweat, and smeared all with Dust;
And from the Towers of Troy, there wou'd appear
The very Eyes of Men thro' Loop-holes thrurt,
Gazing upon the Greeks with little Lust.

Such sweet Observance in this Work was had,
That one might see those far-off Eyes look sad.

In great Commanders, Grace and Majesty
You might behold triumphing in their Faces:
In Youth Quick-bearing and Dexterity:
And here and there the Painter interlaces
Pale Cowards marching on with trembling Paces:
Which heartless Peasants did so well resemble,
That one wou'd swear he saw them quake and tremble.

In Ajax and Ulysses, O! what Art
Of Physiognomy might one behold!
The Face of either cipher'd either's Heart;
Their Face, their Manners most expressly told.
In Ajax' Eyes blunt Rage and Rigor roll'd;
But the mild Glance that the Ulysses lent,
Shew'd deep Regard and smiling Government.

There pleading might you see grave Nestor stand,
As 'twere encouraging the Greeks to fight,
Making such sober Actions with his Hand,
That it beguil'd Attention, charm'd the Sight:
In Speech it seem'd his Beard, all silver white,
Wagg'd up and down, and from his Lips did fly
Thin winding Breath, which purrl'd up to the Sky.

About him were a Press of gaping Faces,
Which seem'd to swallow up his found Advice;
All jointly listening, but with several Graces,
As if some Mermaid did their Ears intice;
Some high, some low, the Painter was so nice.
The Scalps of many almost hid behind,
To jump up higher seem'd to mock the Mind.
142 Tarquin and Lucrece.
Here one Man’s Hand lean’d on another’s Head,
His Nose being shadow’d by his Neighbour’s Ear;
Here one being throng’d, bears back all swoln and red;
Another smother’d, seems to pelt and swear,
And in their Rage, (such Signs of Rage they bear,)
As but for Lo’s of Nestor’s golden Words,
It seems they would debate with angry Swords.

For much imaginary Work was there;
Conceit deceitful, so compact, so kind,
That for Achilles’ Image stood his Spear,
Grip’d in an armed Hand; himself behind
Was left unseen, save to the Eye of Mind:
A Hand, a Foot, a Face, a Leg; a Head,
Stood for the whole to be imagined.

And from the Walls of strong besieged Troy,
When their brave Hope, bold Hector, march’d to Field,
Stood many Trojan Mothers, sharing Joy
To see their youthful Sons bright Weapons wield;
And to their Hope they such odd Action yield,
That thro’ their Light Joy seemed to appear,
(Like bright things stain’d) a kind of heavy Fear.

And from the Strand of Dardan where they fought
To Simois’ reedy Banks the red Blood ran;
Whose Waves to imitate the Battel fought
With swelling Ridges; and their Ranks began
To break upon the galled Shore, and then
Retire again, till meeting greater Ranks
They join, and shoot their Fome at Simois’ Banks.

To this well-painted Piece is Lucrece come
To find a Face where all Distrefs is tell’d;
Many she sees, where Cares have carved some,
But none where all Distrefs and Dolour dwell’d,
Till she despairing Hecuba beheld,
Staring on Priam’s Wounds with her old Eyes,
Who bleeding under Pyrrhus’ proud Foot lies.
In her the Painter had anatomiz'd
Time's Ruin, Beauty's Wreck, and grim Care's Reign;
Her Cheeks with Chops and Wrinkles were disguis'd;
Of what she was, no Semblance did remain;
Her blue Blood chang'd to black in every Vein:
Wanting the Spring, that those shrunk Pipes had fed,
Shew'd Life imprison'd in a Body dead.

On this sad Shadow Lucrece spends her Eyes,
And shapes her Sorrow to the Beldame's Woes;
Who nothing wants to answer her but Cries,
And bitter Words to ban her cruel Foes.
The Painter was no God to lend her those;
And therefore Lucrece swears he did her wrong,
To give her so much Grief, and not a Tongue.

Poor Instrument (quoth she) without a Sound!
I'll tune thy Woes with my lamenting Tongue;
And drop sweet Balm in Priam's painted Wound,
And rail on Pyrrhus, that hath done him wrong,
And with my Tears quench Troy, that burns so long;
And with my Knife scratch out the angry Eyes
Of all the Greeks, that are thine Enemies.

Shew me this Strumpet, that began this Stir,
That with my Nails her Beauty I may tear:
Thy Heat of Lust, fond Paris, did incur
This Load of Wrath, that burning Troy did bear;
Thy Eye kindled the Fire that burneth here:
And here in Troy, for Trespass of thine Eye,
The Sire, the Son, the Dame and Daughter die.

Why should the private Pleasure of some one,
Become the publick Plague of many moe?
Let Sin alone committed, light alone
Upon his Head, that hath transgressed so.
Let guiltless Souls be freed from guilty Woe.
For one's Offence why should so many fall,
To plague a private Sin in general?

Lo!
144 Tarquin and Lucrece.

Lo! here weeps Hecuba, here Priam dies!
Here manly Hector faints, here Troilus sounds!
Here Friend by Friend in bloody Channel lies!
And Friend to Friend gives unadvised Wounds!
And one Man's Lust these many Lives confounds!
Had doing Priam check'd his Son's Desire,
Troy had been bright with Fame, and not with Fire.

Here feelingly she weeps Troy's painted Woes:
For Sorrow, like a heavy hanging Bell,
Once set a ringing, with his own Weight goes;
Then little Strength rings out the doleful Knell.
So Lucrece set a-work, fad Tales doth tell
To pencil'd Pensiveness, and colour'd Sorrow;
She lends them Words, and she their Looks doth borrow.

She throws her Eyes about the painted Round.
And whom she finds forlorn she doth lament:
At last she sees a wretched Image bound,
That piteous Looks to Phrygian Shepherds lent;
His Face, tho full of Cares, yet shew'd Content.
Onward to Troy with these blunt Swains he goes,
So mild, that Patience seem'd to scorn his Woes.

In him the Painter labour'd with his Skill,
To hide Deceit, and give the harmless show,
An humble Gate, calm Looks, Eyes wailing still,
A Brow unbent, that seem'd to welcome Wo;
Cheeks, neither red, nor pale, but mingled so,
That blushing Red, no guilty Instance gave,
Nor ashy Pale, the Fear that false Hearts have.

But, like a constant and confirmed Devil,
He entertain'd a Show so seeming just;
And therein so incconc'd this secret Evil,
That Jealousy it self could not mistrust,
False creeping Craft and Perjury should thrust,
Into so bright a Day such black-face'd Storms,
Or blot with Hell-born Sin such Saint-like Forms.
The well-skill’d Woman this wild Image drew
For perjur’d Sinon, whose enchanting Story
The credulous old Priam after flew;
Whose Words like Wild-fire burnt the shining Glory
Of rich-built Ilion; that the Skies were sorry,
And little Stars shot from their fixed Places,
When their Glass fell wherein they view’d their Faces.

This Picture she advisably perus’d,
And chid the Painter for his wondrous Skill:
Saying, some Shape in Sinon’s was abus’d,
So fair a Form lodg’d not a Mind so ill:
And still on him she gaz’d, and gazing still,
Such Signs of Truth in his plain Face she spy’d,
That she concludes, the Picture was bely’d.

It cannot be (quoth she) that so much Guile,
She would have said, can lurk in such a Look;
But Tarquin’s Shape came in her Mind the while,
And from her Tongue, can lurk, from cannot took;
It cannot be, she in that Sense forsook,
And turn’d it thus; it cannot be, I find,
But such a Face should bear a wicked Mind.

For ev’n as subtle Sinon here is painted,
So sober sad, so weary and so mild,
(As if with Grief or Travel he had faint’d)
To me came Tarquin armed, so beguil’d
With outward Honesty, but yet defil’d
With inward Vice: as Priam him did cherish,
So did I Tarquin, so my Troy did perish.

Look, look how lift’ning Priam wets his Eyes,
To see those borrow’d Tears that Sinon sheds!
Priam, why art thou old, and yet not wise?
For every Tear he falls, a Trojan bleeds:
His Eyes drop Fire, no Water thence proceeds.
Thofe round clear Pearls of his, that move thy Pity,
Are Balls of quenchless Fire to burn thy City.
 TARQUIN and LUCRECE.

Such Devils steal Effects from lightless Hell,
For Sinon in his Fire doth quake with cold,
And in that cold hot-burning Fire doth dwell;
These Contraries such Unity do hold,
Only to flatter Fools, and make them bold:
So Priam's Trustfalse Sinon's Tears doth flatter,
That he finds means to burn his Troy with Water.

Here all inrag'd such Passion her affails,
That Patience is quite beaten from her Breast;
She tears the senseless Sinon with her Nails,
Comparing him to that unhappy Guest,
Whose Deed hath made her feel her self detest.
At last she smilingly with this gives o'er,
Fool! Fool! quoth she, his Wounds will not be sore.

Thus ebbs and flows the Current of her Sorrow,
And Time doth weary Time with her complaining:
She looks for Night, and then she longs for Morrow,
And both she thinks too long with her remaining:
Short time seems long, in Sorrows sharp sustaining.
Tho Woe be heavy, yet it seldom sleeps,
And they that watch, see Time how slow it creeps.

Which all this Time hath over-flipt her Thought,
That she with painted Images hath spent,
Being from the feeling of her own Grief brought,
By deep Surmise of others Detriment,
Loosing her Woes in shews of Discontent.
It easeth some, tho none it ever cur'd,
To think their Dolor others have endur'd.

But now the mindful Messenger comes back,
Brings home his Lord, and other Company;
Who finds his Lucrece clad in mourning Black,
And round about her tear-distained Eye
Blue Circles stream'd, like Rainbows in the Sky.
These Watergalls, in her dim Element,
Foretel new Storms to those already spent.

Which
Which when her sad beholding Husband saw,
Amazedly in her sad Face he stares:
Her Eyes, the sod in Tears, look red and raw,
Her lively Colour kill'd with deadly Cares.
He has no Power to ask her how she fares,
But stood like old Acquaintance in a Trance,
Met far from Home, wondering each other's Chance.

At last he takes her by the bloodless Hand,
And thus begins: What uncouth ill Event
Hath thee befallen, that thou dost trembling stand?
Sweet Love, what Spite hath thy fair Colour spent?
Why art thou thus attir'd in Discontent?
Unmask, dear Dear, this moody Heaviness,
And tell thy Grief, that we may give Redress.

Three Times with Sighs she gives her Sorrow Fire,
Ere once she can discharge one word of Wo:
At length address'd, to answer his Desire,
She modestly prepares, to let them know
Her Honour is ta'en Prisoner by the Foe:
While Colatine, and his comforted Lords,
With sad Attention long to hear her Words.

And now this pale Swan in her wat'ry Nest,
Begins the sad Dirge of her certain ending.
Few Words, quoth she, shall fit the Trespass best,
Wherein no Excuse can give the Fault amending;
In me more Woes than Words are now depending:
And my Laments would be drawn out too long,
To tell them all with one poor tired Tongue.

Then be this all the Task it hath to say,
Dear Husband, in the Interest of thy Bed
A Stranger came, and on that Pillow lay,
Where thou wanst wont to rest thy weary Head;
And what Wrong else may be imagined
By foul Inforcement might be done to me,
From that, alas! thy Lucrece is not free.
148 Tarquin and Lucrece.

For in the dreadful Dead of dark Midnight,
With shining Fauchion in my Chamber, came
A creeping Creature with a flaming Light,
And softly cry'd, Awake thou Roman Dame!
And entertain my Love, else lasting Shame
On thee and thine this Night I will inflict,
If thou my Love's Desire do contradict.

For some hard-favour'd Groom of thine, quoth he,
Unless thou yoke thy Liking to my Will,
I'll murder strait, and then I'll slaughter thee,
And swear I found you, where you did fulfill
The loathsome Act of Lust; and so did kill
The Leachers in their Deed: this Act will be
My Fame, and thy perpetual Infamy.

With this I did begin to start and cry,
And then against my Heart he sets his Sword,
Swearing, unless I took all patiently,
I should not live to speak another word:
So should my Shame still rest upon Record,
And never be forgot in mighty Rome,
Th' adult'rate Death of Lucrece and her Groom.

Mine Enemy was strong, my poor self weak,
(And far the weaker with so strong a Fear)
My bloody Judge forbade my Tongue to speak,
No rightful Plea might plead for Justice there:
His scarlet Lust came Evidence to swear,
That my poor Beauty had purloined his Eyes;
And when the Judge is robb'd, the Prisoner dies.

Oh! teach me how to make mine own Excuse,
Or at the least, this Refuge let me find;
Thou my gross Blood be stain'd with this Abuse,
Immaculate and spotless is my Mind;
That was not forc'd, that never was inclin'd
To accenary Yieldings; but still pure
Doth in her poison'd Closet yet indure.
Lo! here the hopeless Merchant of this Loss,
With Head inclin'd, and Voice damm'd up with Wo;
With sad set Eyes, and wretched Arms across,
From Lips new waxen pale begins to blow
The Grief away, that stops his Answer so.
But wretched as he is, he strives in vain;
What he breathes out, his Breath drinks up again.

As thro' an Arch, the violent roaring Tide
Out-runs the Eye, that doth behold his Haste;
Yet in the Eddy boundeth in his Pride
Back to the Strait, that forc'd him on so fast;
In Rage sent out, recall'd in Rage being past:
Even so his Sighs, his Sorrows make a Saw,
To push Grief on, and back the same Grief draw.

Which speechless Wo of his, poor Me attendeth,
And his untimely Frenzy thus awaketh:
Dear Lord, thy Sorrow to my Sorrow lendeth
Another Power, no Flood my raining slacketh.
My Wo too sensible thy Passion maketh
More feeling painful; let it then suffice
To drown one Wo, one Pair of weeping Eyes.

And for my sake, when I might charm thee so,
For she, that was thy Lucrece—now attend me;
Be suddenly revenged on my Foe;
Thine, mine, his own; suppose thou dost defend me:
From what is past, the Help, that thou shalt lend me;
Comes all too late, yet let the Traitor die,
For sparing Justice feeds Iniquity.

But ere I name him, you fair Lords, quoth she,
(Speaking to those that came with Colatine)
Shall plight your honourable Faiths to me,
With swift Pursuit to 'venge this Wrong of mine;
For 'tis a meritorious fair Design,
To chase Injustice with revengeful Arms,
Knights by their Oaths should right poor Ladies' Harms.
150 **Tarquin and Lucrece.**

At this Request, with noble disposition,
Each present Lord began to promise Aid,
As bound in Knighthood to her Imposition,
Longing to hear the hateful Foe bewray'd:
But she that yet her sad Task hath not said,
The Protestation stops. O speak, quoth she,
How may this forced Stain be wip'd from me?

What is the Quality of my Offence,
Being constrain'd with dreadful Circumstance?
May my pure Mind with the foul Act dispense,
My low declined Honour to advance?
May any Terms acquit me from this Chance?
The poison'd Fountain clears it self again,
And why not I, from this compelled Stain?

With this they all at once began to say,
Her Body's Stain the Mind unrainted clears,
While with a joyless Smile she turns away
The Face, that Map, which deep Impression bears
Of hard Misfortune carved in with Tears.

No, no, quoth she, no Dame hereafter living,
By my Excuse shall claim Excuses giving.

Here with a Sigh, as if her Heart would break,
She throws forth Tarquin's Name. He, he, she says:
But more, than he, her poor Tongue could not speak,
Till after many Accents and Delays,
Untimely Breathings, sick and short Assays,
She utters this, He, he, fair Lord, 'tis He
That guides this Hand to give this Wound to me.

Even here she sheathed in her harmless Breast
A harmful Knife, that thence her Soul unsheathed,
That Blow did bail it from the deep Unrest
Of that polluted Prison where it breathed;
Her contrite Sighs unto the Clouds bequeathed
Her winged Sprite, and thro' her Wounds doth fly
Life's lasting Date from cancel'd Destiny.
Stone-still, athonish'd with this deadly Deed,
Stood Colarine and all his Lordly Crew,
Till Lucrece' Father, that beholds her bleed,
Himself on her self-slaughter'd Body threw:
And from the purple Fountain Brutus drew
The mur'drous Knife, and as it left the Place,
Her Blood, in pure Revenge, held it in chace.

And bubbling from her Breast it doth divide
In two slow Rivers, that the Crimson Blood
Circles her Body in on every Side;
Who like a late sack'd Island vastly stood
Bare and unpeopled in this fearful Flood.
Some of her Blood still pure and red remain'd,
And some look'd black, and that false Tarquin stain'd.

About the mourning and congealed Face
Of that black Blood, a watry Rigol goes,
Which seems to weep upon the tainted Place;
And ever since, as pitying Lucrece' Woes,
Corrupted Blood some watry Token shows:
And Blood untainted still doth red abide,
Blushing at that which is so putrify'd.

Daughter, dear Daughter, old Lucretius cries,
That Life was mine, which thou haft here depriv'd;
If in the Child the Father's Image lies,
Where shall I live, now Lucrece is unliv'd?
Thou waft not to this end from me deriv'd.
If Children predecease Progenitors,
We are their Offspring, and they none of ours.

Poor broken Glass, I often did behold
In thy sweet Semblance, my old Age new-born;
But now that fair fresh Mirror, dim and cold,
Shews me a bare-bon'd Death by Time out-worn:
O! from my Cheeks my Image thou haft torn!
And shiver'd all the Beauty from my Glass,
That I no more can see what once I was.
Tarquin and Lucrece.

O! Time! cease thou thy Course, and haste no longer;
If thou surcease to be, that should survive:
Shall rotten Death make Conquest of the Stronger,
And leave the faint'ring feeble Souls alive?
The old Bees die, the young posses their Hive;
Then live sweet Lucrece, live again and see
Thy Father die, and not thy Father thee.

By this starts Cнатine as from a Dream,
And bids Lucretius give his Sorrow place;
And then in Clay-cold Lucrece's bleeding Stream
He falls, and bathes the pale fear in his Face,
And counterfeits to die with her a Space:
Till manly Shame bids him possess his Breath,
And live to be revenged on her Death.

The deep Vexation of his inward Soul
Hath serv'd a dumb Arrest upon his Tongue;
Who made that Sorrow should his use controul,
Or keep him from Heart-easing Words so long,
He 'gins to talk; but thro' his Lips do throng
Weak Words, so thick come in his poor Heart's Aid,
That no Man could distinguish what he said.

Yet sometime Tarquin was pronounced plain,
But thro' his Teeth, as if his Name he tore:
This windy Tempest, till it blow up Rain,
Held back his Sorrow's Tide to make it more:
At last it rains, and busy Winds give o'er:
Then Son and Father weep with equal Strife,
Who should weep most for Daughter, or for Wife.

The one doth call her his, the other his;
Yet neither may possess the Claim they lay.
The Father says, she's mine; O mine she is,
Replies her Husband; do not take away
My Sorrow's Interest, let no Mourners say,
He weeps for her, for she was only mine,
And only must be wail'd by Colatine.

O!
Tarquin and Lucrece. 153

O! quoth Lucretius, I did give that Life,
Which the too early and too late hath spill'd,
Wo! wo! quoth Colatine, she was my Wife,
I own'd her, and 'tis mine, that she hath kill'd.
My Daughter and my Wife with Clamours fill'd
The disperst Air, who holding Lucrece' Life,
Answer'd their Cries, my Daughter and my Wife.

Brutus, who pluck'd the Knife from Lucrece' Side,
Seeing such Emulation in their Wo,
Began to clothe his Wit in State and Pride,
Burying in Lucrece' Wound his Follies now:
He with the Romans was esteemed so,
As silly jeering idiots are with Kings,
For sportive Words, and uttering foolish things.

But now he throw his shallow Habit by,
Wherein true Policy did him disguise,
And arm'd his long-hid Wits advisedly,
To check the Tears in Colatimus Eyes.
Thou wronged Lord of Rome, quoth he, arise;
Let my unsounded Self, suppos'd a Fool,
Now set thy long experience'd Wit to School.

Why, Colatine, is Woe the Cure for Woe?
Do Wounds help Wounds, or Grief help grievous Deeds?
Is it Revenge to give thy self a Blow
For his foul Aet, by whom thy fair Wife bleeds?
Such childish Humour from weak Minds proceeds:
Thy wretched Wife mistook the matter so,
To slay her self, that should have slain her Foe.

Courageous Roman, do not steep thy Heart
In such lamenting Dew of Lamentations;
But kneel with me, and help to bear thy Part,
To rouse our Roman Gods with Invocations,
That they will suffer these Abominations
(Since Rome her self in them doth stand disgrac'd)
By our strong Arms from forth her fair Streets chas'd.

He 5
Now
154 Tarquin and Lucrece.
Now by the Capitol that we adore!
And by this chaste Blood so unjustly stain'd!
By Heaven's fair Sun, that breeds the fat Earth's Store!
By all our Country Rites in Rome maintain'd!
And by chaste Lucrece' Soul, that late complain'd
Her Wrongs to us, and by this bloody Knife!
We will revenge the Death of this true Wife.

This said, he stroke his Hand upon his Breast,
And kiss'd the fatal Knife to end his Vow:
And to his Protestation urg'd the rest,
Who wondering at him did his Words allow:
Then jointly to the Ground their Knees they bow,
And that deep Vow which Brutus made before,
He doth again repeat, and that they swore.

When they had sworn to this advised Doom,
They did conclude to bear dead Lucrece thence,
To shew the bleeding Body throughout Rome,
And so to publish Tarquin's foul Offence.
Which being done, with speedy Diligence,
The Romans plausibly did give Consent.
To Tarquin's everlasting Banishment.

POEMS
POEMS ON Several Occasions.

The Glory of Beauty.

H. wherefore with Infection should he live?
And with his Presence grace Impiety?
That Sin by him advantage should achieve,
And lace itself with his Society?
Why should false Painting imitate his Cheek,
And steal dead seeing of his living hue?
Why should poor Beauty indirectly seek
Roses of Shadow, since his Rose is true?
Why should he live, now Nature bankrupt is,
Beggar'd of Blood, to blush thro' lively Veins?

For
Thus is his Cheek, the Map of Days, out-worn,
When Beauty liv’d and dy’d as Flowers do now;
Before these bastard Signs of Fair were born,
Or durst inhabit on a living-Brow:
Before the golden Tresses of the Dead,
The Right of Sepulchers, were shorn away,
To live a second Life on second Head,
Ere Beauty’s dead Fleecemade another gay.
In him those holy antique Hours are seen,
Without all Ornament it self, and true,
Making no Summer of another’s Green,
Robbing no old, to dress his Beauty new:
And him as for a Map doth Nature store,
To show false Art what Beauty was of yore.

Those Parts of thee, that the World’s Eye doth view,
Want nothing, that the Thought of Hearts can mend:
All Tongues (the Voice of Souls) give thee thy due,
Uttering bare Truth, even so as Foes commend.
Their Outward thus with outward Praise is crown’d,
But those same Tongues that give thee so thine own,
In other Accents do this Praise confound,
By seeing farther than the Eye hath shewn.
They look into the Beauty of thy Mind,
And that in ghe’s they measure by thy Deeds;
Then their churl Thoughts (altho’ their Eyes were kind)
To thy fair Flower add the rank Smell of Weeds.
But why? thy Odor matcheth not thy Show,
The Toil is this, that thou dost common grow.

Injurious
Injurious Time.

Like as the Waves make towards the pibbled Shore,
So do our Minutes hasten to their end:
Each changing Place with that which goes before,
Insequent Toil all forwards do contend.
Nativity once in the main of Light,
Crawls to Maturity, wherewith being crown'd,
Crooked Eclipses 'gainst his Glory fight,
And Time that gave, doth now his Gift confound.
Time doth transfixed the Flourish set on Youth,
And delves the Parallels in Beauty's Brow,
Feeds on the Rarities of Nature's Truth,
And nothing stands but for his Scythe to mow.
   And yet to Times, in hope, my Verse shall stand,
   Praising thy Worth, despite his cruel Hand.

Against my Love shall be as I am now,
With Time's injurious Hand crush'd and o'er-worn;
When Hours have drain'd his Blood, and fill'd his Brow
With Lines and Wrinkles; when his youthful Morn
Hath travel'd on to Age's steepy Night,
And all those Beauties, whereof now he's King,
Are vanishing: or vanish'd out of sight,
Stealing away the Treasure of his Spring:
For such a time, do I now fortify,
Against confounding Age's cruel Knife,
That he shall never cut from Memory
My Sweet Love's Beauty, tho my Lover's Life.
   His Beauty shall in these black Lines be seen,
   And they shall live; and he in them still green.

When I have seen, by Time's fell Hand defac'd,
The rich proud Cost of out-worn bury'd Age;
When sometimes lofty Towers I see down raz'd,
And Bra's eternal Slave to mortal Rage;
When I have seen the hungry Ocean gain
Advantage on the Kingdom of the Shoar,
And the firm Soil win of the wary Main,
Poems on Several Occasions.

Increasing Store with Loss, and Loss with Store;
When I have seen such Interchange of State,
Or State it self confounded, to decay:
Ruin hath taught me thus to ruminate,
That Time will come, and take my Love away.
This Thought is as a Death, which cannot chuse
But weep to have that which it fears to lose.

Since Brass, nor Stone, nor Earth, nor boundless Sea,
But bad Mortality o'er-ways their Power:
How with this Rage shall Beauty hold a Plea,
Whose Action is no stronger than a Flower?
O! how shall Summer's hungry Breath hold out
Against the wrackful Siege of battering Days;
When Rocks impregnable are not so stout,
Nor Gates of Steel so strong, but Time decays?
O! fearful Meditation! where, alack!
Shall Time's best Jewel from Time's Chest lie hid?
Or what strong Hand can hold this swift Foot back,
Or who his Spoil, on Beauty can forbid?
O! none! unless this Miracle have might,
That in black Ink my Love may still shine bright.

Tir'd with all these, for restful Death I cry;
As to behold Desert a Beggar born,
And needy Nothing trimm'd in Jollity,
And purest Faith unhappily forsworn,
And gilded Honour shamefully misplac'd,
And maiden Virtue rudely trumpetted,
And right Perfection wrongfully disgrac'd,
And Strength by limping Sway disabled;
And Art made Tongue-ty'd by Authority,
And Folly (Doctor-like) controlling Skill,
And simple Truth miscall'd Simplicity,
And Captive Good attending Captain Ill:
Tir'd with all these, from these would I be gone,
Save that to die, I leave my Love alone.
True Admiration.

What is your Substance, whereof are you made,
That Millions of strange Shadows on you tend?
Since every one, hath every one, one Shade,
And you but one, can every Shadow lend?
Describe Adonis, and the Counterfeit
Is poorly imitated after you;
On Helen's Cheek all Art of Beauty set,
And you in Grecian Tires are painted new.
Speak of the Spring and Foyzen of the Year,
The one doth Shadow of your Beauty show,
The other as your Bounty doth appear,
And you in every blessed shape we know:
    In all external Grace you have some part,
    But you like none, none you, for constant Heart.

O! how much more doth Beauty beauteous seem,
By that sweet ornament which Truth doth give!
The Rose looks fair, but fairer we it deem
For that sweet Odour, which doth in it live.
The Canker-Blooms have full as deep a Dye,
As the perfumed Tincture of the Roses,
Hang on such Thorns, and play as wantonly,
When Summer's Breath their masked Buds discloses:
But for their Virtue's only in their Show,
They live unmov'd, and unregarded fade,
Die to themselves: Sweet Roses do not so,
Of their sweet Deaths are sweetest Odours made:
    And so of you, beauteous and lovely Youth,
    When that shall fade, by Verse distills your Truth.
The Force of Love

Being your Slave, what should I do, but tend
Upon the Hours and times of your Desire.
I have no precious Time at all to spend,
Nor Services to do, till you require:
Nor dare I chide the world-without-end Hour,
Whilst I (my Sovereign) watch the Clock for you;
Nor think the Bitterness of Absence sour,
When you have bid your Servant once adieu,
Nor dare I question with my jealous Thought,
Where you may be, or your Affairs suppose;
But like a sad Slave stay, and think of nought,
Save where you are: how happy you make those!

So true a Fool is Love, that in your Will,
(Tho you do any thing) he thinks no ill.

That God forbid, that made me first your Slave,
I should in Thought controul your times of Pleasure;
Or at your hand th' Account of Hours to crave,
Being your Vassal, bound to stay your leisure.
O let me suffer (being at your beck)
Th' imprison'd Absence of your Liberty;
And Patience, tame to Sufferance, bide each Check,
Without accusing you of Injury!
Be where you list, your Charter is so strong,
That you your self may privilege your Time
To what you will; to you it doth belong
Your self to pardon of self-doing Crime.

I am to wait, tho waiting so be Hell;
Not blame your Pleasure, be it ill or well.
The Beauty of Nature.

If there be nothing new, but that which is
Hath been before, how are our Brains beguil'd?
Which labouring for Invention, bear amiss,
The second Burden of a former Child?
O! that Record could with a backward Look,
Ev'n of five hundredCourses of the Sun;
Show me your Image in some antique Book,
Since mine at first in Character was done!
That I might see what the old World could say
To this composed Wonder of your Frame;
Whether we're mended, or where better they,
Or whether Revolution be the same.
O! sure I am, the Wits of former days,
To Subjects worse, have given admiring Praise.

Love's Cruelty.

From fairest Creatures we desire Increase;
That thereby Beauty's Rose may never die;
But as the Riper should by time decease,
His tender Heir might bear his Memory.
But thou contracted to thine own bright Eyes,
Feed'st thy Light's Flame with self-substantial Fuel;
Making a Famine where Abundance lies;
Thy self thy Foe, to thy sweet self too cruel.
Thou that art now the World's fresh Ornament,
And only Herald to the gaudy Spring,
Within thine own Bud buryest thy Content,
And tender Churl mak'st waste in niggarding:
Pity the World, or else this Glutton be
To eat the World's due, by the Grave and thee.

When forty Winters shall besiege thy Brow,
And dig deep Trenches in thy Beauty's Field,
Thy Youth's proud Livery, so gaz'd on now,
Will be a tatter'd Weed of small worth held;
Then being ask'd where all thy Beauty lies,
Where all the Treasure of thy lusty Days;
To say within thine own deep-sunken Eyes,
Were an all-eating Shame and thriftless Praise.
How much more Praise deserv'd thy Beauty's Use,
If thou could'st answer, This fair Child of mine
Shall sum my Count, and make my old Excuse,
Proving his Beauty by Succession thine?
This were to be new made when thou art old,
And see thy Blood warm, when thou feel'st it cold.

Look in thy Glass, and tell the Face thou viewest,
Now is the time that Face should form another,
Whose fresh Repair, if now thou not renewest,
Thou dost beguile the World, unblest some Mother.
For where is she so fair, whose un-ear'd Womb
Disdains the Tillage of thy Husbandry?
Or who is he so fond, will be the Tomb
Of his Self-Love, to stop Posterity?
Thou art thy Mother's Glass, and she in thee
Calls back the lovely April of her Prime:
So thou thro' Windows of thine Age shalt see,
Despite of Wrinkles, this thy golden Time.
But if thou live, remember not to be;
Die single, and thine Image dies with thee.

Youthful Glory.

That you were your self! but, Love, you are
No longer yours, than you your self here live;
Against this coming End you should prepare,
And your sweet Semblance to some other give.
So shou'd that Beauty, which you hold in Leafe,
Find no Determination; then you were
Your self again, after your self's Decease,
When your sweet Issue your sweet Form should bear.

Who
Poems on several Occasions.

Who lets so fair a House fall to Decay,
Which Husbandry in honour might uphold,
Against the stormy Gufs of Winter's Day,
And barren Rage of Death's eternal Cold?
O! none but Unthrifts: dear my Love, you know
You had a Father, let your Son say so.

Not from the Stars do I my Judgment pluck,
And yet methinks I have Astronomy;
But not to tell of good or evil Luck,
Of Plagues, of Dearth, or Seasons Quality;
Nor can I Fortune to brief Minutes tell,
Pointing to each his Thunder, Rain, and Wind;
Or say, with Princes if it shall go well,
By ought predict that I in Heaven find:
But from thine Eyes my Knowledge I derive,
And constant Stars; in them I read such Art,
As Truth and Beauty shall together thrive,
If from thy self, to store thou would'st convert:
Or else of thee this I prognosticate,
Thy Endis Truth's and Beauty's Doom and Date.

When I consider, every thing that grows
Holds in perfection but a little moment;
That this huge Stage presenteth nought but Shows,
Whereon the Stars in secret Influence comment;
When I perceive, that Men as Plants increase,
Chear'd and check'd ev'n by the self-same Sky:
Vaunt in their youthful Sap, at height decrease,
And wear their brave State out of memory;
Then the Conceit of this inconstant Stay,
Sets you most rich in Youth before my sight,
Where wasteful Time debateeth with Decay,
To change your Day of Youth to fullied Night;
And all in war with Time, for love of you,
As he takes from you, I ingraft you new.

Good
BUT wherefore do not you a mightier way,
Make war upon this bloody Tyrant, Time?
And fortify your self, in your Decay,
With Means more blessed than my barren Rhime?
Now stand you on the top of happy Hours,
And many Maiden Gardens yet unfer,
With virtuous With'would bear you living Flowers,
Much likeer than your painted Counterfeit.
So should the Lines of Life that Life repair,
Which this (Time's Pencil) or my Pupil Pen,
Neither in inward Worth, nor outward Fair,
Can make you live your self in Eyes of Men.
To give away your self, keeps your self still,
And you must live, drawn by your own sweet Skill.

Who will believe my Verse, in time to come,
If it were fill'd with your most high Deserts?
Tho yet, Heaven knows, it is but as a Tomb,
Which hides your Life, and shows not half your Parts.
If I could write the Beauty of your Eyes,
And in fresh Numbers number all your graces;
The Age to come would say this Poet lyes,
Such heavenly Touches ne'er touch'd earthly Faces.
So should my Papers (yellow'd with their Age)
Be scorn'd, like old Men of if's Truth than Tongue;
And your true Rights be term'd a Poet's Rage,
And stretched Metre of an antick Song.
But were some Child of yours alive that time,
You should live twice in it, and in my Rhime.
Quick Prevention.

Lo! in the Orient when the gracious Light
Lifts up his burning Head, each under Eye
Doth homage to his new appearing Sight,
Serving with Looks his sacred Majesty:
And having climb'd the steep-up heavenly Hill,
Resembling strong Youth in his middle Age,
Yet mortal Looks adore his Beauty still,
Attending on his golden Pilgrimage.
But when from high-moist Pitch, with weary Care,
Like feeble Age he reeleth from the Day;
The Eyes ('fore duteous) now converted are
From his low Track, and look another way.
So thou, thy self out-going in thy Noon,
Unlook'd on diest, unless thou get a Son.

Magazine of Beauty.

Unthrift Loveliness, why dost thou spend
Upon thy self thy Beauty's Legacy?
Nature's Bequest gives nothing, but doth lend,
And being frank, she lends to those are free.
Then, beauteous Niggard, why dost thou abuse
The bounteous Large's given thee to give?
Profiteers Usurer, why dost thou use
So great a Sum of Sums, yet can'ft not live?
For having Traffick with thy self alone,
Thou of thy self thy sweet self dost deceive;
Then how when Nature calls thee to be gone,
What acceptable Audit can'ft thou leave?
Thy unus'd Beauty must be tomb'd with thee,
Which used lives th' Executor to be.

Those
Those Hours, that with gentle Work did frame
The lovely Gaze, where every Eye doth dwell,
Will play the Tyrants to the very fame,
And that unfair, which fairly doth excel.
For never-resting Time leads Summer on
To hideous Winter, and confounds him there;
Sap check'd with Frost, and lufty Leaves quite gone;
Beauty o'er-snow'd, and Barrenness every where.
Then were not Summer's Distillation left
A liquid Prisoner, pent in Walls of Glafs,
Beauty's Effect with Beauty were bereft,
Nor it nor no Remembrance what it was.
But Flowers distill'd, tho they with Winter meet,
Lose but their Show, their Substance still lives sweet.

Then let not Winter's ragged Hand deface
In thee thy Summer, ere thou be distill'd,
Make sweet some Vial, treasure thou some place
With Beauty's Treasure, e'er it be self-kill'd:
That Use is not forbidden Usury,
Which happies those that pay the willing Loan;
That's for thy self to breed another thee,
Or ten times happier, be it ten for one:
Ten times thy self were happier than thou art,
If ten of thine ten times refigur'd thee;
Then what could Death do, if thou should'st depart,
Leaving thee living in Posterity?
Be not self-will'd, for thou art much too fair
To be Death's Conquest, and make Worms thine Heir.

An Invitation to Marriage.

Musk to hear, why hear'st thou musick sadly?
Sweets with Sweets war not, Joy delights in Joy:
Why lov'st thou that, which thou receiv'st not gladly?
Or else receivest with Pleasure thine Annoy?

If
If the true Concord of well-tuned Sounds,
By Unions married, do offend thy Ear,
They do but sweetly chide thee, who confounds
In singleness the Parts that thou should'st bear.
Mark how one String, sweet Husband to another,
Strikes each in each by mutual ordering;
Refembling Sire and Child, and happy Mother,
Who all in one, one pleasing Note do sing:
Whose speechless Song, being many, seeming one,
Sings this to thee, thou single wilt prove none.

Is it for fear to wet a Widow's Eye,
That thou consum'st thy self in single Life?
Ah! if thou issue-less shalt hap to die,
The World will wail thee Like a makeless Wife:
The World will be thy Widow, and still weep,
That thou no Form of thee hast left behind;
When every private Widow well may keep,
By Children's Eyes, her Husband's Shape in mind:
Look what an Unthrift in the World doth spend,
Shifts but his place, for still the World enjoys it:
But Beauty's Waste hath in the World an end,
And kept unus'd, the Us'rer so destroys it.

No Love towards others in that Bofom fits,
That on himself such mur'd'rous Shame commits.

For shame! deny, that thou bear'st Love to any,
Who for thy self art so unprovided;
Grant, if thou wilt, thou art belov'd of many,
But that thou none lov'st, is most evident:
For thou art so possed with mur'd'rous Hate,
That 'gainst thy self thou stick'st not to conspire,
Seeking that beauteous Roof to ruinate,
Which to repair, should be thy chief Desire.
O change thy Thought, that I may change my Mind!
Shall Hate be fairer lodg'd than gentle Love?
Be, as thy Presence is, gracious and kind,
Or to thy self, at least, kind-hearted prove:
Make thee another self, for love of me,
That Beauty still may live in thine or thee.

As
As fast as thou shalt wane, so fast thou grow'st
In one of thine, from that which thou departest;
And that fresh Blood which youngly thou bestow'st,
Thou may'st call thine, when thou from Youth convertest.
Herein lives Wisdom, Beauty, and Increase;
Without this, Folly, Age, and cold Decay;
If all were minded so, the Times should cease,
And threescore Years would make the World away.
Let those whom Nature hath not made for Store,
Harsh, featureless, and rude, barrenly perish:
Look whom the best endow'd, she gave the more;
Which bounteous Gift thou should'st in Bounty cherish:
She carv'd thee for her Seal, and meant thereby
Thou should'st print more, not let that Copy die.

When I do count the Clock, that tells the time,
And see the brave Day sunk in hideous Night;
When I behold the Violet past Prime,
And sable Curls are silver'd o'er with white;
When lofty Trees I see barren of Leaves,
Which erst from Heat did canopy the Herd,
And Summer's Green all girded up in Sheaves,
Borne on the Bier, with white and briskly Beard:
Then of thy Beauty do I question make,
That thou among the Waftes of time must go,
Since Sweets and Beauties do themselves forfake,
And die as fast as they see others grow;
And nothing 'gainst Time's Scithe can make defence,
Save Breed, to brave him when he takes thee hence.

False Belief:

WHEN my Love swears that she is made of Truth,
I do believe her (tho' I know she lies)
That she might think me some untutor'd Youth,
Unskilful in the World's false Forgeries.
Thus vainly thinking, that she thinks me young,
Altho' I know my Years be past the best;
Poems on several Occasions.

A smiling, credit her false speaking Tongue,
Out-facing Faults in Love, with Love's ill Rest.
But wherefore says my Love, that she is young?
And wherefore say not I, that I am old?
O Love's best habit is a smoothing Tongue,
And Age (in Love) loves not to have Years told.
Therefore I'll lye with Love, and Love with me,
Since that our Faults in Love thus smother'd be.

A Temptation.

Two Loves I have, of Comfort and Despair,
That like two Spirits do suggest me still:
My better Angel is a Man (right fair)
My worser Spirit a Woman (colour'd ill.)
To win me soon to Hell, my Female Evil
Tempteth my better Angel from my side,
And would corrupt my Saint to be a Devil,
Wooing his Purity with her fair Pride.
And whether that my Angel be turn'd Fiend,
Suspect I may, yet not directly tell;
For being both to me, both to each Friend,
I guess one Angel in another's Hell.
The Truth I shall not know, but live in doubt,
Till my bad Angel fire my good one out.

Fast and Loose.

I D not the heavenly Rhetorick of thine Eye,
'Gainst whom the World could not hold Argument,
Perfus'd my Heart to this false Perjury,
Vows for thee broke, deserve not Punishment.
A Woman I forswore: But I will prove,
Thou being a Goddess, I forswore not thee:
My Vow was earthly, thou a heavenly Love,
Thy Grace being gain'd, cures all Disgrace in me.
Poems on several Occasions.

My Vow was Breath, and Breath a Vapour is;
Then shou'd, fair Sun, that on this Earth doth shine,
Exhale this Vapour Vow, in thee it is:
If broken then, it is no fault of mine.
If by me broke, what Fool is not so wise
To break an Oath, to win a Paradise?

True Content.

So is it not with me, as with that Muse,
Stirr'd by a painted Beauty to his Verse,
Who Heaven it self for Ornament doth use,
And every Fair with his Fair doth rehearse:
Making a Compliment of proud Compare
With Sun and Moon, with Earth and Sea's rich Gems,
With April's first-born Flowers, and all things rare,
That Heaven's Air, in this huge Rondure hems.
O! let me, true in Love, but truly write,
And then believe me, my Love is as fair
As any Mother's Child, tho not so bright
As those gold Candles fix'd in Heaven's Air.
Let them say more, that like of Hearfay well;
I will not praise, that purpose not to tell.

A Bashful Lover.

As an unperfect Actor on the Stage,
Who with his Fear is put beside his Part;
Or some fierce thing replete with too much Rage,
Whose Strength abundant weakens his own Heart:
So I, for fear of Truth, forget to say
The perfect Ceremony of Love's Right,
And in mine own Love's Strength seem to decay,
O'errang'd with Burden of mine own Love's Might.
O! let my Looks be then the Eloquence,
And dumb Prefagers of my Speaking Breast;
Poems on several Occasions. 171
Who plead for Love, and look for Recompence,
More than that Tongue that more hath more express.
O learn to read what silent Love hath writ!
To hear with Eyes belongs to Love's fine Wit.

Strong Conceit.

My Glass shall not persuade me I am old,
So long as Youth and thou art of one Date;
But when in thee Time's Sorrows I behold,
Then look I Death my Days should expiate.
For all that Beauty, that doth cover thee,
Is but the seemly Raiment of my Heart,
Which in thy Breast doth live, as thine in me,
How can I then be elder than thou art?
O therefore, Love! be of thyself so wary,
As I not for my self, but for thee, will,
Bearing thy Heart, which I will keep so chary,
As tender Nurse her Babe from faring ill.
Presume not on thy Heart, when mine is slain;
Thou gav'st me thine, not to give back again.

A Sweet Provocation.

Sweet Cytherea, sitting by a Brook,
With young Adonis, lovely fresh and green,
Did court the Lad with many a lovely Look,
Such looks as none could look but Beauty's Queen;
She told him Stories, to delight his Ears;
She shew'd him Favours, to allure his Eye;
To win his Heart, she toucht him here and there;
Touches so soft, still conquer Chastity.
But whether unripe Years did want Conceit,
Or he refus'd to take her figur'd Proffer,
A Constant Vow.

If Love make me forsworn, how shall I swear to love?
O! never Faith cou'd hold, if not to Beauty vow'd:
Tho' to my self forsworn, to thee I'll constant prove,
Those Thoughts to me like Oaks, to thee like Oysters bow'd.

Study his Byas leaves, and makes his Book thine Eyes,
Where all those Pleasures live, that Art can comprehend.

If Knowledge be the Mark, to know thee shall suffice:
Well learned is that Tongue, that well can thee commend!

All ignorant that Soul, that sees thee without Wonder,
Which is to me some Praise, that I thy Parts admire:
Thine Eye Love's Lightning seems, thy Voice his dreadful Thunder,
Which (not to Anger bent) is Musick and sweet Fire.

Celestial as thou art, O! do not love that Wrong!

To sing Heaven's Praise with such an earthly Tongue.

The Exchange.

Woman's Face, with Nature's own Hand painted,
Haft thou the Master, Mistress of my Passion;

A Woman's gentle Heart, but not acquainted
With shifting Change, as is false Women's Fashion.

An Eye more bright than theirs, less false in rolling:
Gilding the Object whereupon it gazeth.

A Man in hue all Hue in his controuling,
Which steals Mens Eyes, and Women's Souls amazeth.

And
Poems on several Occasions. 173

And for a Woman wer't thou first created,
Till Nature, as she wrought thee, fell a doting,
And by Addition me of thee defeated;
By adding one thing, to my purpose nothing.
But since she prick'd thee out for Women's Pleasure,
Mine be thy Love, and thy Love's Use their Treasure.

A Disconsolation.

W EAR Y with Toil, I haste me to my Bed,
The dear Repose for Limbs with Travel tired,
But then begins a Journey in my Head,
To work my Mind, when Body's Work's expired.
For then my Thoughts (far from where I abide)
Intend a zealous Pilgrimage to thee,
And keep my drooping Eye-lids open wide,
Looking on Darkness, which the Blind do see.
Save that my Soul's imaginary Sight
Presents their Shadow to my sightless View;
Which, like a Jewel (hung in ghastly Night)
Makes black Night beauteous, and her old Face new.

Lo! thus by Day my Limbs, by Night my Mind,
For thee, and for my self no Quiet find.

How can I then return in happy plight,
That am debar'd the Benefit of Rest?
When Day's Oppression is not eas'd by Night,
But Day by Night, and Night by Day opprest?
And each (tho Enemies to other's Reign)
Do in consent shake Hands to torture me;
The one by Toil, the other to complain,
How far I toil, still farther off from thee.
I tell the Day, to please him, thou art bright,
And dost him grace when Clouds do blot the Heaven:
So flatter I the swart-complexion'd Night,
When sparkling Stars twear out, thou gild'st th' Even.

But Day doth daily draw my Sorrows longer,
And Night doth nightly make Grief's length seem stronger.

I 3

When
Poems on several Occasions.

When in Disgrace with Fortune and Mens Eyes
I all alone beweep my out-cast State,
And trouble deaf Heaven with my bootless Cries,
And look upon my self and curse my Fate:
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featur'd like him, like him with Friends possest;
Desiring this Man's Art, and that Man's Scope,
With what I most enjoy contented leaft.
Yet in these Thoughts, my self almost despising,
Haply I think on thee, and then my State,
Like to the Lark, at break of Day arising
From fallen Earth, to sing at Heaven's Gate.
   For thy sweet Love remembred, such Wealth brings,
   That then I scorn to change my State with Kings.

Cruel Deceit.

SCARCE had the Sun dry'd up the dewy Morn;
And scarce the Herd gone to the Hedg for Shade;
When Cytherea (all in Love forlorn).
A longing Tarriance for Adonis made.
Under an Osier growing by a Brook;
A Brook, where Adon us'd to cool his Spleen,
Hot was the Day, she hotter, that did look
For his Approach, that often here had been.
Anon he comes, and throws his Mantle by,
And stoo'd stark naked on the Brook's green Brim:
The Sun look'd on the World with glorious Eye,
Yet not so whiskly, as this Queen on him:
   He spying her, bounc'd in (whereas he stoo'd)
   O! Love! (quoth she) why was not I a Flood?

The:
Poems on several Occasions. 275.

The Unconstant Lover.

Fair is my Love, but not so fair as fickle;
Mild as a Dove, but neither true nor trusty;
Brighter than Glass, and yet as Glass is brittle;
Softer than Wax, and yet as Iron rusty:
A Lily pale, with Damask Dye to grace her;
None fairer, nor none failer to deface her.

Her Lips to mine how often hath she joined;
Between each Kiss her Oaths of true Love swearing;
How many Tales to please me hath she coined,
Dreading my Love, the Loss thereof still fearing;
Yet in the midst of all her pure Protestings,
Her Faith, her Oaths, her Tears, and all were Jeatings.

She burnt with Love, as Straw with Fire flameth;
She burnt out Love, as soon as Straw out burning;
She fram'd the Love, and yet she foil'd the Framing;
She had Love last, and yet she fell a turning.
Was this a Lover, or a Letcher whether?
Bad at the best, tho' excellent in neither.

The Benefit of Friendship.

When to the Sessions of sweet silent Thought,
I summon up Remembrance of Things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old Woes new wail my dear Time's waste.
Then can I drown an Eye (unus'd to flow)
For precious Friends hid in Death's dateless Night,
And weep afresh Love's long since cancell'd Woe,
And moan th' Expence of many a vanish'd Sight.
Then can I grieve at Grievances foregone,
And heavily from Woe to Woe tell o'er
The sad Account of fore-bemoaned Moan,
Which I new pay, as if not paid before:

But
But if the while I think on thee (dear Friend):  
All Losses are restor'd, and Sorrows end.

Thy Bosom is indebted with all Hearts,  
Which I by lacking have supposed dead;  
And there reigns Love, and all Love's loving Parts,  
And all those Friends, which I thought buried.  
How many a holy and obsequious Tear  
Hath dear religious Love stolen from mine Eye,  
As Interest of the Dead, which now appear  
But things remov'd, that hidden in thee lie!  
Thou art the Grave where buried Love doth live,  
Hung with the Trophies of my Lovers gone;  
Who all their Parts of me to thee did give,  
That due of many, now is thine alone.  
Their Images I lov'd, I view in thee,  
And thou (all they) haft all the all of me.

If thou survive my well-contented Day,  
When that Churl Death my Bones with Dust shall cover;  
And shalt by Fortune once more re-survey  
These poor rude Lines of thy deceased Lover:  
Compare them with the bea'tring of the Time,  
And tho' they be out-tript by every Pen,  
Reserve them for my Love, not for their Rhime,  
Exceeded by the height of happier Men.  
Oh then vouchsafe me but this loving Thought!  
Had my Friend's Muse grown with this growing Age,  
A dearer Birth than this, his Love had brought,  
To march in Ranks of better Equipage:  
But since he died, and Poets better prove,  
Theirs for their Stile I'll read, his for his Love.

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Friendly Concord.

If Musick and sweet Poetry agree,  
As they must needs (the Sister and the Brother)  
Then must the Love be great 'twixt thee and me,  
Because thou lov'st the one, and I the other.  
Dowland.
Poems on several Occasions. 177

Dowland to thee is dear, whose heavenly Touch
Upon the Lute, doth ravish human Sense:
Spencer to me, whose deep Conceit is such,
As passing all Conceit, needs no Defence.
Thou lovest to hear the sweet melodious Sound,
That Phæbus' Lute (the Queen of Musick) makes;
And in deep Delight am chiefly drownd,
When as himself to Singing he betakes.
One God is God of both (as Poets fain)
One Knight loves both, and both in thee remain.

Inhumanity.

Fair was the Morn, when the fair Queen of Love,
Paler for Sorrow than her milk-white Dove,
For Adon's sake, a Youngster proud and wild,
Her Stand she takes upon a steep-up Hill.
Anon Adonis comes with Horn and Hounds,
She, sily Queen, with more than Love's good Will,
Forbad the Boy he should not pass thos[e] Grounds:
Once (quoth she) did I see a fair sweet Youth
Here in these Brakes, deep wounded with a Boar,
Deep in the Thigh a Spectacle of Ruth;
See in my Thigh (quoth she) here was the Sore:
She sawed her, he saw more Wounds than one,
And blushing fled, and left her all alone.

A Congratulation.

How can my Muse want Subject to invent,
While thou dost breathe, that pour'st into my Verse
Thine own sweet Argument, too excellent
For every vulgar Paper to rehearse?
Oh! give thy self the Thanks, if ought in me,
Worthy Perusal, stand against thy sight;
For who's so dull, that cannot write to thee,
When thou thy self dost give Invention Light?
Poems on several Occasions.

Be thou the tenth Muse, ten times more in worth,
Than those old Nine which Rhimers invoke;
And he that calls on thee, let him bring forth
Eternal Numbers to out-live long Date.

If my flight Muse do please these curious Days,
The Pain be mine, but thine shall be the Praise.

Oh! how thy Worth with Manners may I sing,
When thou art all the better Part of me?
What can mine own Praise to mine own self bring?
And what is't but mine own when I praise thee?
Even for this, let us divided live,
And our dear Love lose Name of single one;
That by this Separation I may give
That due to thee, which thou deserv'lt alone.

Oh Absence! what a Torment wouldst thou prove,
Weren't not that thy four Leisure gave sweet Leave
To entertain the Time with Thoughts of Love,
Who Time and Thoughts so sweetly dost deceive;

And that thou teachest how to make one twain,
By praising him here, who doth hence remain.

Take all my Loves, my Love, yea take them all,
What hast thou then more, than thou hadst before?
No Love, my Love, that thou may'st true Love call,
All mine was thine, before thou hadst this more. Then if for my Love, thou my Love receivest,
I cannot blame thee, for my Love thou usest;
But yet be blam'd, if thou thy self deceivest.

By wilful Taste of what thy self refusest,
I do forgive thy Robb'ry, gentle Thief,
Altho' thou stealest thee all my Poverty:
And yet Love knows it is a greater Grief

To bear Love's Wrong, than Hate's known Injury.
Lascivious Grace, in whom all ill well shows,
Kill me with Spite, yet we must not be Foes.
LOFs and Gain.

THOSE pretty Wrongs that Liberty commits,
When I am sometimes absent from thy Heart,
Thy Beauty and thy Years full well befir,
For still Temptation follows where thou art.
Gentle thou art, and therefore to be won;
Beauteous thou art; and therefore to be affiailed,
And when a Woman woos, what Woman's Son
Will sooner leave her till he have prevailed?
Ay, me! but yet thou might'st my Seat forbear,
And chide thy Beauty and thy straying Youth,
Who lead thee in their Riot even there,
Where thou art forc'd to break a twofold Truth:
Hers by thy Beauty tempting her to thee,
Thine by thy Beauty being false to me.

That thou hast her, it is not all my Grief,
And yet it may be said I lov'd her dearly;
That she hath thee, is of my wailing chief,
A Loss in Love that touches me more nearly.
Loving Offenders, thus I will excuse ye,
Thou dost love her, because thou know'st I love her;
And for my sake even so doth she abuse me,
Suffering my Friend; for my sake, to approve her.
If I lose thee, my Loss is my Love's Gain,
And losing her, my Friend hath found that Loss:
Both find each other, and I lose both twain,
And both for my sake lay on me this Cross.
But here's the Joy, my Friend and I are one,
Sweet Flattery, then she loves but me alone.

Foolish Disdain.

VENUS, with Adonis sitting by her,
Under a Myrtle Shade, began to woo him:
She told the Youngling how God Mars did try her,
And as he fell to her, she fell to him.

Even
180 Poems on Several Occasions.

Even thus (quoth she) the warlike God embrac'd me,
And then she clipt Adonis in her Arms:
Even thus (quoth she) the warlike God unlac'd me,
As if the Boy should use like loving Charms.
Even thus (quoth she) he seized on my Lips,
And with her Lips on his did act the Seizure:
And as she fetched Breath, away he skips.
And would not take her Meaning nor her Pleasure.

Ah! that I had my Lady at this Bay,
To kiss and clip me till I run away.

Antient Antipathy.

CRABBED Age and Youth cannot live together;
Youth is full of Pleasure, Age is full of Care;
Youth like Summer Morn, Age like Winter Weather;
Youth like Summer brave, Age like Winter bare.
Youth is full of Sport, Age's Breath is short;
Youth is nimble, Age is lame;
Youth is hot and bold, Age is weak and cold;
Youth is wild, and Age is tame.

Age I do abhor thee, Youth I do adore thee;
O! my Love, my Love is young.
Age I do defy thee, Oh! sweet Shepherd hie thee;
For, methinks, thou stay'st too long.

Beauty's Valuation.

BEAUTY is but a vain and doubtful Good,
A shining Gloss, that fadeth suddenly;
A Flower that dies, when first it gins to bud;
A brittle Glass, that's broken presently.
A doubtful Good, a Gloss, a Glass, a Flower.
Loth, faded, broken, dead within an Hour.
Poems on several Occasions. 181:

And as Goods lost, are feld' or never found;
As faded Glass no rubbing will refresh;
As Flowers dead, lie withered on the Ground;
As broken Glass, no Cement can redress:
So Beauty blemish'd once, for ever's lost,
In spite of Physick, Painting, Pain and Cost.

Melancholy Thoughts.

If the dull Substance of my Flesh were Thought,
Injurious Distance should not stop my way;
For then, despite of Space, I would be brought
To Limits far remote, where thou dost stay.
No matter then altho my Foot did stand
Upon the farthest Earth remov'd from thee;
For nimble Thought can jump both Sea and Land,
As soon as think the Place where he would be.
But, ah! Thought kills me, that I am not Thought,
To leap large Lengths of Miles when thou art gone;
But that so much of Earth and Water wrought,
I must attend Time's Leisur with my Moan;
Receiving nought by Elements so flow,
But heavy Tears, Badges of either's Woe.

The other two, flight Air, and purging Fire,
Are both with thee, where-ever I abide;
The first my Thought, the other my Desire;
These present, absent, with swift Motion slide.
For when these quicker Elements are gone,
In tender Embassy of Love to thee,
My Life being made of four, with two alone
Sinks down to Death, opprest with Melancholy;
Until Life's Composition be recured,
By those swift Messengers return'd from thee;
Who even but now come back again assured
Of their fair Health, recounting it to me.
This told, I joy; but then no longer glad,
Isend them back again, and strait grow sad.

Love's.
Love's Loss.

SWEET Rose, fair Flower, untimely pluck'd, soon faded,
Pluck'd in the Bud, and faded in the Spring:
Bright orient Pearl, alack! too timely shaded,
Fair Creature kill'd too soon by Death's sharp Sting:
Like a green Plumb, that hangs upon a Tree,
And falls (tho' Wind) before the Fall should be.

I weep for thee, and yet no Cause I have,
For why? Thou lests me nothing in thy Will;
And yet thou lests me more than I did crave,
For why? I craved nothing of thee still:
O yes (dear Friend) I pardon crave of thee,
Thy Discontent thou didst bequeath to me.

Love's Relief.

FULL many a glorious Morning have I seen,
Flatter the Mountain Tops with Sovereign Eye,
Kissing with golden Face the Meadows green;
Gilding pale Streams with heavenly Alchumy;
Anon permit the basest Clouds to ride,
With ugly Rack on his celestial Face,
And from the forlorn World his Visage hide;
Stealing unseen to West with this Disgrace.
Even to my Sun one early Morn did shine,
With all triumphant Splendor on my Brow;
But out, alack! he was but one Hour mine,
The Region Cloud hath mask'd him from me now.
Yet him for this my Love no whit disdaineth;
Suns of the World may stain, when Heaven's Sun
staineth.
Poems on several Occasions.

Why didst thou promise such a beauteous Day,
And make me travel forth without my Cloke,
’Tis let base Clouds overtake me in my way,
Hiding thy Bravery in their rotten Smoke?
’Tis not enough that thro’ the Cloud thou break,
To dry the Rain on my storm-beaten Face;
For no Man well of such a Salve can speak,
That heals the Wound, and cures not the Disgrace:
Nor can thy Shame give Physick to my Grief,
Tho’ thou repent, yet I have still the Cross;
Th’ Offender’s Sorrow lends but weak Relief
To him, that beareth strong Offences Cross.
Ah! but those Tears are Pearl which thy Love sheds,
And they are rich, and ransom all ill Deeds.

No more be griev’d at that which thou hast done,
Roses have Thorns, and silver Fountains Mud;
Clouds and Eclipses stain both Moon and Sun,
And loathsome Canker lives in sweetest Bud.
All Men make Faults, and even I in this,
Authorizing thy Trespass with Compare,
My self corrupting, halting thy Amifs,
Excusing their Sins more than their Sins are:
For to my sensual Fault I bring Incense,
Thy adverse Party is thy Advocate;
And ’gainst my self a lawful Plea commence;
Such Civil War is in my Love and Hate,
That I an Accessary needs must be
To that sweet Thief which sorely robs from me.

Unanimity.

Let me confess, that we two must be twain,
Altho’ our undivided Loves are one:
So shall those Blots, that do with me remain
Without thy help, by me be borne alone.
Poems on several Occasions.

In our two Loves there is but one Respect,
Tho in our Lives a separable Spite;
Which tho it alter not Love’s sole Effect,
Yet doth it steal sweet Hours from Love's Delight.
I may not evermore acknowledge thee,
Left my bewailed Guilt shoud do thee Shame,
Nor thou with publick Kindness honour me,
Unless thou take that Honour from thy Name.
    But do not so, I love thee in such sort,
    As thou being mine, mine is thy good Report.

As a decrepit Father takes Delight
To see his active Child do Deeds of Youth;
So I, made lame by Fortune’s dearest Spite,
Take all my Comfort of thy Worth and Truth.
For whether Beauty, Birth, or Wealth, or Wit,
Or any of these all, or all, or more,
Intitled in their Parts, do crowned fit,
I make my Love ingrafted to this Store:
So then I am not lame, poor, nor despis’d,
Whilst that this Shadow doth such Substance give,
That I in thy Abundance am suffic’d,
And by a Part of all thy Glory live:
    Look what is best, that Best I wish in thee;
    This Wish I have, then ten times happy me.

Loth to depart.

GOOD Night, good Rest; ah! neither be my Share:
    She bad good Night, that kept my Rest away;
And daft me to a Cabbend hang’d with Care,
To deschant on the Doubts of my Decay.
    Farewel (quoth she) and come again to morrow;
    Fare well I could not, for I suft with Sorrow.

Yet at my Parting sweetly did she smile,
In Scorn, or Friendship, ill I confater whether;
It may be she joy’d to jest at my Exile;
It may be again to make me wander thither.
Wander (a word) for Shadows like my self;
As take the Pain, but cannot pluck the Pelt.

Lord! how mine Eyes throw Gazes to the East!
My Heart doth charge the Watch; the Morning Rife
Doth cite each moving Sense from idle Rest,
Not daring trust the Office of mine Eyes.
While Philomela sits and sings, I sit and mark,
And with her Lays were tuned like the Lark.

For she doth welcome Day-light with her Ditty,
And drives away dark dreaming Night:
The Night to packt, I post unto my Pretty;
Heart hath his Hope, and Eyes their wished Sight;
Sorrow chang'd to Solace, and Solace mixt with Sorrow;
For why? she figh'd, and bad me come to morrow.

Were I with her, the Night would post too soon,
But now are Minutes added to the Hours:
To spite me now, each Minute seems an Hour,
Yet not for me, shine Sun-to succour Flowers.
Pack Night, peep Day, good Day of Night now borrow:
Short Night, to Night, and length thy self to Morrow.

**A Master-piece.**

MINE Eye hath play'd the Painter, and hath steel'd:
Thy Beauty's Form in Table of my Heart:
My Body is the Frame wherein 'tis held,
And Perspective it is. Left Painter's Art.
For thro' the Painter must you see his Skill;
To find where your true Image pictur'd lies,
Which in my Bosom's Shop is hanging still,
That hath his Windows glazed with thine Eyes.
Now see what good turns Eyes for Eyes have done;
Mine Eyes have drawn thy Shape, and thine for me
Are Windows to my Breast, where thro' the Sun
Delights to peep, to gaze therein on thee.

Yet
Happiness in Content.

Let those who are in favour with their Stars,
Of publick Honour and proud Titles boast:
Whilst I, whom Fortune of such Triumph bars,
Unlook'd-for joy in that I honour most.
Great Princes Favourites their fair Leaves spread,
But as the Marigold at the Sun's Eye;
And in themselves their Pride lies buried,
For at a Frown they in their Glory die.
The painful Warrior famous for Worth,
After a thousand Victories, once foiled,
Is from the Book of Honour razed quite,
And all the rest forgot, for which he toil'd.

Then happy I, that love and am beloved,
Where I may not remove, nor be removed.

A Dutiful Message.

Lord of my Love, to whom in Vassalage
Thy Merit hath my Duty strongly-knit;
To thee I send this written Embassage;
To witness Duty, not to shew my Wit;
Duty so great, which Wit so poor as mine
May make seem bare, in wanting Words to shew it;
But that I hope some good Conceit of thine
In my Soul's Thought (all naked) will bestow it.
Till whatsoever Star, that guides my moving,
Points on me graciously with fair Aspect;
And puts Apparel on my tatter'd Loving,
To show me worthy of their sweet Respect.
Then may I dare to boast how I do love thee;
Till then, not shew my head, where thou may'st prove me.
Go and Come quickly.

How heavy do I journey on the way,
When That I seek (my weary Travel's end)
Doth teach that Ease and that Repose to say,
Thus far the Miles are measur'd from thy Friend?
The Beast that bears me, tired with my Wo,
Plods dully on, to bear that Weight in me;
As if by some Instinct the Wretch did know
His Rider lov'd not Speed being made from thee;
The bloody Spur cannot provoke him on,
That sometimes Anger thrusts into his Hide;
Which heavily he answers with a Groan;
More: sharp to me, than Spurring to his Side.
For that same Groan doth put this in my mind,
My Grief lies onward, and my Joy behind.

Thus can my Love excuse the slow Offence
Of my dull Bearer, when from thee I speed.
From where thou art, why should I haste me thence?
Till I return, of posting is no need.
O! what Excuse will my poor Beast then find,
When swift Extremity can seem but slow?
Then should I spur, tho mounted on the Wind;
In winged Speed no Motion shall I know.
Then can no Horse with my Desire keep pace,
Therefore Desire (of perfect Love being made).
Shall neigh no dull Flesh in his fiery Race,
But Love for Love thus shall excuse my Jade.
Since from thee going, he went wilful slow,
Towards thee I'll run, and give him leave to go.

Two Faithful Friends.

Mine Eye and Heart are at a mortal War,
How to divide the Conquest of thy Sight:
Mine Eye, my Heart their Pictures right would bar.
My Heart, mine Eye the Freedom of that Right:

M.
188 Poems on several Occasions.

My Heart doth plead, that thou in him doft lie;
(A Closet never pierc'd with crystal Eyes)
But the Defendant doth that Plea deny,
And says, in him their fair Appearance lies.
To 'cide this Title, is impannelled
A Quest of Thoughts, all Tenants to the Heart;
And by their Verdict is determined
The clear Eye's Moiety, and the dear Heart's Part,
As thus; mine Eyes Due is their outward Part,
And my Heart's Right, their inward Love of Heart.

Betwixt mine Eye and Heart a League is took,
And each doth good turns now unto the other:
When that mine Eye is famish'd for a Look,
Or Heart in love with Sighs himself doth smother;
With my Love's Picture then my Eye doth feast,
And to the painted Banquet bids my Heart.
Another time mine Eye is my Heart's Guest,
And in his Thoughts of Love doth share a part.
So either by the Picture of my Love,
Thy self away, are present still with me;
For thou not farther than my Thoughts canst move,
And I am still with them, and they with thee.
Or if they sleep, thy Picture in my sight
Awakes my Heart, to Heart's and Eyes Delight.

Careless Neglect.

How careful was I, when I took my way
Each Trifle under truest Bars to thrust;
That to my Use it might unused stay
From hands of Falshood, in sure Wards of Trust?
But thou, to whom my Jewels Trifles are,
Most worthy Comfort, now my greatest Grief:
Thou best of Dearest, and mine only Care,
Art left the Prey of every vulgar Thief.

Thee
Thee have I not lock'd up in any Chest,
Save where thou art not; 'tho I feel thou art
Within the gentle Closure of my Breast,
From whence at pleasure thou mayst come and part;
And even thence thou wilt be stol'n, I fear;
For Truth proves thievish for a Prize so dear.

Stout Resolution.

Against that time (if ever that time come)
When I shall see thee frown on my Defects;
Whereas thy Love hath cast his utmost Sun,
Call'd to that Audit by advis'd Respects:
Against that time, when thou shalt strangely pass,
And scarcely greet me with that Sun, thine Eye;
When Love, converted from the thing it was,
Shall Reasons find of settled Gravity:
Against that time, do I insconce me here,
Within the Knowledge of mine own Desert;
And this my Hand against my self up-rear,
To guard the lawful Reasons on thy part;
To leave poor me, thou haft the Strength of Laws,
Since why to love, I can alledge no cause.

A Duel.

It was a Lording's Daughter,
The fairest one of three,
That liked of her Master, as well as well might be:
Till looking on an Englishman,
The fairest Eye could see,
Her Fancy fell a turning.

Long
190 Poems on several Occasions.

Long was the Combat doubtful,
That Love with Love did fight:
To leave the Master loveless, or kill the gallant Knight;
To put in practice either,
Alas! it was a Spite.
Unto the silly Damsel.

But one must be refused,
More mickle was the Pain;
That nothing could be used, to turn them both to Gain:
For of the two the trusty Knight
Was wounded with Dismay,
Alas! she could not help it.

Thus Art with Arms contending,
Was Victor of the Day;
Which by a Gift of Learning did bear the Maid away.
Then, lullaby, the learned Man
Hath got the Lady gay:
For now my Song is ended.

Love-sick.

On a Day (alack the Day!) Love, whose Month was ever May,
Spy'd a Blossom passing Fair,
Playing in the wanton Air.
Thro' the velvet Leaves the Wind,
All unseen, 'gan Passage find,
That the Lover (sick to Death)
Wish'd himself the Heaven's Breath.
Air (quoth he) thy Cheeks may blow;
Air! would I might triumph so!
But (alas!) my Hand hath sworn
Ne'er to pluck thee from thy Throne;
Vow, (alack!) for Youth unmeet,
Youth, so apt to pluck a Sweet;
Thou, for whom ev'n Love would swear
Juno but an Ethiopian were;
Poems on several Occasions. 191

And deny himself for Love,
Turning Mortal for thy Love.

Love's Labour lost.

My Flocks feed not, my Ewes breed not,
My Rams speed not; all is amiss:
Love is dying, Faith's defying,
Heart's denying, Causeth of this.

All my merry Jigs are quite forgot,
All my Lady's Love is lost (God wot)
Where her Faith was firmly fix'd in Love,
There a Nay is plac'd, without Remove.

One silly Cross wrought all my Lofs;
O! frowning Fortune, cursed fickle Dame!
For now I see Inconstancy
More in Women than in Men remain.

In Black mourn I, all Fears scorn I,
Love hath forlorn me living in Thrall;
Heart is bleeding, all Help needing;
O! cruel Speeding, fraughted with Gall!
My Shepherd's Pipe can sound no Deal
My Weather's Bell rings doleful Knell;
My curtail Dog, that wont to have, play'd,
Plays not at all, but seems afraid.

With sighs so deep, procures to weep
In howling wise, to see my doleful Plight;
How Sighs resound thro' heartless ground,
Like a thousand vanquish'd Men in bloody Fight.

Clear Wells spring not, sweet Birds sing not,
Green plants bring not forth their Dye;
Herds stand weeping, Flocks all sleeping,
Nymphs black peeping fearfully.
All our Pleasure known to us poor Swains;
All our merry Meetings on the Plains.

All
Poems on several Occasions.

All our Evening Sport from us is fled;
All our Love is lost, for Love is dead.
Farewel, sweet Love, thy like ne'er was,
For a sweet Content, the Cause of all my Woe;
Poor Coridon must live alone,
Other Help for him, I see, that there is none.

Wholesome Counsel.

Whenas thine Eye hath chose the Dame,
And staid the Deer that thou should'st strike;
Let Reason rule things worthy Blame,
As well as Fancy (partly all might)
Take counsel of some wiser Head,
Neither too young, nor yet unwed.

And when thou com'st thy Tale to tell,
Smooth not thy Tongue with filed Talk;
Left she some subtle Practice smell;
A Cripple soon can find a Halt.
But plainly say, thou lov'st her well,
And let her Person forth to Sale.

What tho' her frowning Brows be bent,
Her cloudy Looks will calm ere Night;
And then too late she will repent,
That thus dissembled her Delight;
And twice desire, ere it be Day,
That which with Scorn she put away.

What tho' she strive to try her Strength,
And ban, and brawl, and say thee Nay;
Her feeble Force will yield at length,
When Craft hath taught her thus to say:
Had Women been so strong as Men,
In Faith, you had not had it then.

And
And to her Will frame all thy ways,
Spare not to spend, and chiefly there,
Where thy Desert may merit Praise,
By ringing in thy Lady's Ear:
The Strongest Castle, Tower, and Town,
The golden Bullet beats it down.

Serve always with assured Trust,
And in thy Suit be humble true;
Unless thy Lady prove unjust,
Please never thou to choose a new.
When time shall serve, be thou not slack
To proffer, tho she put it back.

The Wiles and Guiles that Women work,
Dissimplied with an outward Shew
The Tricks and Toys that in them lurk,
The Cock that treads them shall not know.
Have you not heard it said full oft
A Woman's Nay doth stand for nought?

Think Women still to strive with Men
To sin, and never for to faint:
There is no Heaven (by Holy then)
When Time with Age shall them attaint.
Were Kisses all the Joys in Bed,
One Woman would another wed.

But soft enough, too much I fear,
Left that my Mistress hear my Song;
She will not stick to round me on th' Ear,
To teach my Tongue to be so long.
Yet will she blush, here be it said,
To hear her Secrets so bewraid.

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Poems on several Occasions.

Sat Fuisse.

IN of Self-love possesseth all mine Eye,
And all my Soul, and all my every part;
And for this Sin there is no Remedy,
It is so grounded inward in my Heart.
Methinks no Face so gracious is, as mine;
No Shape so true, no Truth of such account;
And for my self mine one Worth do define,
As I all other in all Worths surmount.
But when my Glass shews me my self indeed,
Beated and chop'd with Tann'd Antiquity;
Mine own Self-love quite contrary I read,
Self, so self-loving, were Iniquity:
'Tis thee (my Self) that for my self I praise,
Painting my Age with Beauty of thy Days.

A Living Monument.

NOT Marble, nor the gilded Monument
Of Princes, shall out-live this powerful Rhime;
But you shall shine more bright in these Contents,
Than unswept Stone besmeer'd with sluttish Time.
When wailful War shall Statues overturn,
And Broils root out the Work of Masonry;
Nor Mars's Sword, nor War's quick Fire shall burn
The living Record of your Memory.
'Gainst Death, and all oblivious Enmity,
Shall you pace forth; your Praise shall still find room,
Even in the eyes of all Posterity,
That wear this World out to the ending Doom.

So till the Judgment, that your self arise,
You live in this, and dwell in Lovers Eyes.

Familiarity
Familiarity breeds Contempt.

So am I as the Rich, whose blessed Key
Can bring him to his sweet up-locked Treasure,
The which he will not every Hour survey,
For blunting the fine Point of seldom Pleasure.
Therefore are Feasts so solemn and so rare;
Since seldom coming, in the long Year set,
Like Stones of Worth they thinly placed are,
Or Captain Jewels in the Carconet.
So is the time that keeps you, as my Chest,
Or as the Wardrobe, which the Robe doth hide,
To make some special Instant special blest,
By new unfolding his imprison'd Pride.
  Blessed are you, whose Worthiness gives scope,
  Being had to Triumph, being lack'd to Hope.

Patiens Armatus.

Is it thy Will, thy Image should keep open
My heavy Eye-lids to the weary Night?
Doest thou desire my Slumbers should be broken,
While Shadows, like to thee, do mock my Sight?
Is it thy Spirit that thou send'st from thee,
So far from home, into my Deeds to pry?
To find out Shames, and idle Hours in me,
The Scope and Tenure of thy Jealousy?
O! no, thy Love, tho much is not so great;
It is my Love, that keeps mine Eye awake;
Mine own true Love, that doth my Rest defeat,
To play the Watchman ever for thyfake.
  For thee watch I, whilst thou dost wake elsewhere,
  From me far off, with others all too near.
No longer mourn for me when I am dead;
When you shall hear the surly fallen Bell
Give warning to the World, that I am fled
From this vile World, with vilest Worms to dwell.
Nay, if you read this Line remember not
The Hand that writ it; for I love you so,
That I in your sweet Thoughts wou'd be forgot,
If thinking on me then, should make you woe.
O! if (I say) you look upon this Verse,
When I (perhaps) compounded am with Clay;
Do not so much as my poor Name rehearse,
But let your Love even with my Life decay:
Left the wife World should look into your Moan,
And mock you with me, after I am gone.

O! let the World should task you, to recite
What Merit liv'd in me, that you should love;
After my Death (dear Love!) forget me quite,
For you in me can nothing worthy prove:
Unless you would devise some virtuous Lye,
To do more for me now, than mine own Desert,
And hang more Praise upon deceased I,
Than niggard Truth would willingly impart.
O! let your true Love may seem false in this,
That you for Love speak well of me untrue;
My Name be buried where my Body is,
And live no more to shame nor me, nor you:
For I am sham'd by that which I bring forth;
And so should you, to love things nothing worth.

But be contented, when that fell Arrest,
Without all Bail, shall carry me away;
My Life hath in this Line some Interest,
Which for Memorial still with thee shall stay.
When thou reviewest this, thou dost review
The very Part was consecrate to thee:
Poems on several Occasions. 197

The Earth can have but Earth, which is his due;
My Sprite is thine, the better Part of me.
So then thou hast but loft the Dregs of Life,
The Prey of Worms, my Body being dead;
The coward Conquest of a Wretch's Knife,
Too base of thee to be remembred.
The worth of that, is that which it contains;
And that is this, and this with thee remains.

Nil Magnis Invidia.

That thou art blam'd, shall not be thy Defect;
For Slander's Mark was ever yet the Fair:
The Ornament of Beauty is Suspect;
A Crow that flies in Heaven's sweetest Air.
So thou be good, Slander doth but approve
Their Worth the greater, being woo'd of Time;
For canker Vice the sweetest Buds doth love,
And thou present'st a pure unstained Prime.
Thou hast past by the Ambush of young Days,
Either not assail'd, or Victor, being charg'd;
Yet this thy Praise cannot be so thy Praise,
To tie up Envy, evermore enlarg'd;
If some Suspect of Ill, mask not thy Show.
Then thou alone Kingdoms of Hearts shouldst owe.

Love-sick.

O How I faint, when I of you do write!
Knowing a better Spirit doth use your Name;
And in the Praise thereof spends all his might,
To make me tongue-ty'd, speaking of your Fame.
But since your Worth (wide as the Ocean is)
The humble as the proudest Sail doth bear;
Poems on several Occasions.

My saucy Bark (inferior far to his)
On your broad Main doth wilfully appear.
Your shallowest Help will hold me up a-float,
Whist he upon your soundless Deep doth ride;  
Or (being wreck'd) I am a worthless Boat,
He of tall Building, and of goodly Pride.
Then if he thrive, and I be cast away,
The worst was this, my Love was my Decay:

Or shall I live your Epitaph to make?
Or you survive, when I in Earth am rotten?
From hence your Memory Death cannot take,
Altho in me each Part will be forgotten.
Your Name from hence immortal Life shall have,
Tho I (once gone) to all the World must die;
The Earth can yield me but a common Grave,
When you intomb'd in Mens Eyes shall lie:
Your Monument shall be my gentle Verse,
Which Eyes not yet created shall o'er-read;
And Tongues to be, your Being shall rehearse,
When all the Breathers of this World are dead;
You still shall live (such Virtue hath my Pen)
Where Breath most breathes, ev'n in the mouths of Men:

The Picture of True Love.

Let me not to the Marriage of true Minds
Admit Impediments; Love is not Love,
Which alters when it Alteration finds,
Or bends with the Remover to remove.
No; it is an ever-fixed Mark,
That looks on Tempests, and is never shaken:
It is the Star to every wandering Bark,
Whose Worth's unknown, altho his Height be taken.
Love's not Time's Fool, tho rosy Lips and Cheeks
Within his bending Sickle's Compass come:

Love
Love alters not with his brief Hours and Weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of Doom.
   If this be Error, and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no Man ever loved.

In Praise of his Love.

I Grant thou wert not marry’d to my Muse,
   And therefore mayst without Attaint o’er-look
The dedicated Words which Writers use
Of their fair Subject, blessing every Book :
Thou art as fair in Knowledge as in Hue ;
Finding thy Worth a Limit past my Praise ;
And therefore art incour’d to seek a new
Some fresher Stamp of the time-bettering Days :
And do so love, yet when they have devis’d
What straining Touches Rhetorick can lend,
Thou truly fair, wert truly sympathiz’d,
In true plain Words, by thy true telling Friend.
   And their gross Painting might be better us’d,
Where Cheeks need Blood, in thee it is abus’d.

I never saw, that you did Painting need,
And therefore to you Fair no Painting set :
I found (or thought I found) you did exceed
The barren Tender of a Poet’s Debt :
And therefore have I slept in your Report,
That you your self being extant, well might show,
How far a modern Quill doth come too short,
Speaking of Worth, what Worth in you doth grow.
This Silence of my Sin you did impute,
Which shall be most my Glory, being dumb ;
For I impair not Beauty, being mute,
When others would give Life, and bring a Tomb.
   There lives more Life in one of your fair Eyes,
Than both your Poets can in Praise devise.
200 Poems on several Occasions.

Who is it, that says most, which can say more
Than this rich Praise, that you alone are you?
In whose Confine immured is the Store,
Which should example, where your Equal grew.
Lean Penury within that Pen doth dwell,
That to his Subject lends not some small Glory:
But he that writes of you, if he can tell
That you are you, so dignifies his Story.
Let him but copy what in you is writ,
Not making worse what Nature made so clear;
And such a Counter-part shall fame his Writ,
Making him still admir'd every where.
You to your beauteous Blessing add a Curse,
Being fond of Praise, which makes your Praises worse.

My tongue-ty'd Muse in Manners holds her still,
While Comments of your Praise, richly compil'd,
Reserve their Character with golden Quill,
And precious Phrase by all the Muses fill'd.
I think good Thoughts, whilst others write good Words,
And, like unletter'd Clerk, still cry Amen
To every Hymn that able Spirit affords,
In polish'd Form of well-refined Pen.
Hearing you praised, I say 'tis so, 'tis true,
And to the most of Praise add something more;
But that is in my Thought, whose Love to you
(Tho Words come hind-most) holds his Rank before:

Then others, for the Breath of Words, respect;
Me for my dumb Thoughts, speaking in Effect.

___________________________

A Resignation.

Was it the proud full Sail of his great Verse,
Bound for the Prize of (all-too-precious) you,
That did my ripe Thoughts in my Brain rehearse,
Making their Tomb the Womb wherein they grew?
Was it his Spirit, by Spirits taught to write
Above a mortal pitch, that struck me dead?

No
Poems on several Occasions. 201

No, neither he nor his Compeers by Night
Giving him aid, my Verse astonished.
He nor that affable familiar Ghost,
Which nightly gulls him with Intelligence,
As Victors, of my Silence cannot boast;
I was not sick of any Fear from thence.

But when your Countenance fill'd up his Line,
Then lack'd I Matter, that infeculled mine.

Farewel, thou art too dear for my possessing,
And, like enough, thou know'st thy Estimate:
The Charter of thy Worth gives thee releasing;
My Bonds in thee are all determinate,
For how do I hold thee, but by thy granting,
And for that Riches, where is my deserving?
The Caufe of this fair Gift in me is wanting,
And so my Patent back again is swerving.

Thy self thou gav'ft, thy own Worth then not knowing,
Or me, to whom thou gav'ft it, else mistaking:
So thy great Gift upon Misprision growing,
Comes home again, on better Judgment making.

Thus have I had thee, as a Dream doth flatter,
In Sleep a King, but waking, no such matter.

Sympathizing Love.

As it fell upon a Day,
In the merry Month of May,
Sitting in a pleasant Shade,
Which a Grove of Myrtles made,
Beasts did leap, and Birds did sing,
Trees did grow, and Plants did spring:
Every thing did banish Moan,
Save the Nightingale alone;
She (poor Bird !) as all forlorn,
Lean'd her Breast up-till a Thorn,
And there sung the dolefullest Ditty
That to hear it, was great Pity:

K 5
Fie, fie, fie, now would she cry;
Terent, Terent, by and by;
That to hear her so complain,
Scarcely I could from tears restrain:
For her griefs so lovely shown,
Made me think upon mine own.
Ah! (thought I) thou mourn'st in vain,
None takes pity on thy pain:
Senseless trees, they cannot hear thee;
Ruthless bears, they will not hear thee;
King Pandion he is dead;
All thy friends are lap'd in lead;
All thy fellow-birds do sing,
Careless of thy sorrowing:
Whilest as fickle fortune smilest,
Thou and I were both beguil'd;
Every one that flatters thee,
Is no friend in misery.
Words are easy, like the wind,
Faithful friends are hard to find:
Every man will be thy friend,
Whilst thou hast wherewith to spend;
But if store of crowns be scant,
No man will supply thy want.
If that one be prodigal,
Bountiful they will him call;
And with such like flattering,
Pity but he was a king.
If he be addicted to vice,
Quickly him they will intice.
If to women he be bent,
They have him at commandment.
But if fortune once do frown,
Then farewell his great renown:
They that fawn'd on him before,
Use his company no more.
He that is thy friend indeed,
He will help thee in thy need;
If thou sorrow, he will weep;
If thou awake, he cannot sleep.

Thus
Poems on several Occasions. 263

Thus of every Grief in Heart,
He with thee doth bear a part.
These are certain Signs, to know
Faithful Friend from flattering Foe.

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A Request to his Scornful Love.

When thou shalt be dispos'd to set me light,
And place my Merit in the Eye of Scorn,
Upon thy side, against thy self I'll fight,
And prove thee virtuous, tho' thou art forsworn.
With mine own Weakness being best acquainted,
Upon thy part I can set down a Story
Of faults conceal'd, wherein I am attainted:
That thou in losing me shalt win much Glory:
And I by this will be a Gainer too.
For breading all my loving Thoughts on thee;
The Injuries that to my self I do,
Doing thee Vantage, double vantage me.
Such is my Love, to thee I so belong,
That for thy Right, my self will bear all Wrong.

Say that thou didn't forsake me for some fault,
And I will comment upon that Offence;
Speak of my Lameness, and I 'strait will halt;
Against thy Reasons making no Defence.
Thou canst not (Love) disgrace me half so ill,
To set a Form upon desired Change,
As I'll my self disgrace; knowing thy Will,
I will Acquaintance strangle, and look strange;
Be absent from thy Walks, and on my Tongue
Thy sweet beloved Name no more shall dwell,
Left I (too much profane) should do it wrong,
And haply of our old Acquaintance tell.
For thee, against my self, I'll vow Debate;
For I must ne'er love him, whom thou dost hate.

Then
Then hate me when thou wilt; if ever, now,
Now while the world is bent my deeds to cross,
Join with the spite of fortune, make me bow,
And do not drop in for an after loss:
Ah! do not, when my heart hath 'scap'd this sorrow,
Come in the reward of a conquer'd woe!
Give not a windy night a rainy morn,
To linger out a purposed overthrow.
If thou wilt leave me, do not leave me last,
When other petty griefs have done their spite;
But in the onset come, so shall I taste
At first the very worst of fortune's might.
    And other strains of woe, which now seem woe,
Compar'd with loss of thee, will not seem so.

Some glory in their birth, some in their skill,
Some in their wealth, some in their bodies force,
Some in their garments, the new-fangled ill;
Some in their hawks and hounds, some in their horse:
And every humour hath his adjunct pleasure,
Wherein it finds a joy above the rest.
But these particulars are not my measure,
All these I better, in one general best.
Thy love is better than high birth to me,
Richer than wealth, prouder than garments cost;
Of more delight than hawks or horses be:
And having thee, of all men pride I boast.
Wretched in this alone, that thou may'st take
All this away, and me most wretched make.

A Lover's Affection, tho' his love prove unconstant.

But do thy worst to steal thy self away,
For term of life thou art assur'd mine;
And life no longer than my love will stay,
For it depends upon that love of thine.
Then need I not to fear the worst of wrongs,
When in the least of them my life hath end;
I see a better State to me belongs,
Than that which on my Humour doth depend.
Thou canst not vex me with inconstant Mind,
Since that my Life on thy Revolt doth lie;
Oh! what a happy Title do I find,
Happy to have thy Love, happy to die!
But what's so blessed fair, that fears no Blot?
Thou mayst be false, and yet I know it not.

So shall I live, supposing thou art true,
Like a deceived Husband; so Love's Face
May still seem Love to me, tho alter'd new;
Thy Looks with me, thy Heart in other Place.
For there can live no Hatred in thine Eye,
Therefore in that I cannot know thy Change.
In manies Looks the false Heart's History
Is writ in Moods and Frowns and Wrinkles strange:
But Heaven in thy Creation did decree,
That in thy Face sweet Love should ever dwell;
Whate'er thy Thoughts, or thy Heart's Workings be,
Thy Looks shall nothing thence but Sweetness tell.
How like Eve's Apple doth thy Beauty grow,
If thy sweet Virtue answer not thy Show!

They that have Power to hurt, and will do none,
That do not do the thing they must do, show;
Who moving others, are themselves as Stone
Unmoved, cold and to Temptation slow:
They rightly do inherit Heaven's Graces,
And husband Nature's Riches from Expence;
They are the Lords and Owners of their Faces,
Others but Stewards of their Excellence.
The Summer's Flower is to the Summer sweet,
Tho to it self it only live and die;
But if that Flower with base Infection meet,
The basest Weed out-braves his Dignity:
For sweetest things turn sourest by their Deeds;
Lillies, that fairest, smell far worse than Weeds.

How sweet and lovely dost thou make the Shame,
Which, like a Canker in the fragrant Rose,
Doth spot the Beauty of thy budding Name?
Oh! in what Sweets dost thou thy Sins inclose?
That Tongue, that tells the Story of thy Days,
(Making lascivious Comments on thy Sport)
Cannot dispraise; but in a kind of Praise;
Naming thy Name, blesses an ill Report.
Oh! what a Mansion have those Vices got,
Which for their Habitation chuse out thee!
Where Beauty's Veil doth cover every Blot,
And all things turn to Fair, that Eyes can see!
Take heed (dear Heart) of this large Privilege,
The hardest Knife, ill us'd, doth lose his Edge.

Complaint for his Lover's Absence.

OW like a Winter hath my absence been
From thee, the Pleasure of the fleeting Year!
What Freezings have I felt, what dark Days seen?
What old December's Barrenness every where?
And yet this Time remov'd was Summer's Time;
The teeming Autumn big with rich Increase,
Bearing the wanton Burden of the Prime,
Like widow'd Wombs after their Lord's Decease.
Yet this abundant Issue seem'd to me,
But Hope of Orphans and un-father'd Fruit;
For Summer and his Pleasures wait on thee,
And thou away, the very Birds are mute:
Or if they sing, 'tis with so dull a Cheer,
That Leaves look pale, dreading the Winter's near.

From you have I been absent in the Spring,
When proud py'd April (drest in all his Trim)
Hath put a Spirit of Youth in every thing,
That heavy Saturn laugh'd and leap'd with him.
Yet not the Lays of Birds, nor the Sweet Smell
Of different Flowers in Odor and in Hue,
Cou'd make me any Summer's Story tell;
Or from their proud Lap pluck them where they grew.
Nor
Nor did I wonder at the Lillies white,
Nor praise the deep Vermilion in the Rose;
They were but sweet, but Figures of Delight,
Drawn after you, you Pattern of all those.
Yet seem'd it Winter still, and you away,
As with your Shadow I with these did play.

The forward Violet thus did I chide;
Sweet Thief! whence didst thou steal thy Sweet that smells.
If not from my Love's Breath? The purple Pride,
Which on thy soft Cheek for Complection dwells,
In my Love's Veins thou hast too grossly dy'd:
The Lilly I condemned for thy Hand,
And Buds of Marjoram had stol'n thy Hair;
The Roses fearfully on Thorns did stand,
One blushing Shame, another white Despair;
A third nor red, nor white, had stol'n of both,
And to his Robb'ry had annex'd thy Breath;
But for his Theft, in Pride of all his Growth,
A vengeful Canker eat him up to Death.
More Flowers I noted, yet I none could see,
But Sweet or Colour it had stol'n from thee.

An Invocation to his Muse.

Whence art thou Muse, that thou forget'st so long
To speak of that which gives thee all thy Might?
Spend'st thou thy Fury on some worthless Song,
Darkning thy Power to lend base Subjects Light?
Return, forgetful Muse, and slay redeem,
In gentle Numbers, Time so idly spent;
Sing to the Ear, that doth thy Lays esteem,
And give thy Pen both Skill and Argument.
Rise, resty Muse, my Love's sweet face survey,
If Time hath any Wrinkle graven there;
If any, be a Satire to Decay,
And make Time's Spoils despised every where.
Poems on several Occasions.

Give my Love Fame, faster than Timé waftes Life,
So thou prevent'ft his Scithe, and crooked Knife.

Oh ! truant Muse ! what shall be thy Amends,
For thy Neglect of Truth in Beauty dy'd?
But Truth and Beauty on my Love depends:
So dost thou too, and therein dignify'd,
Make answer, Muse, wilt thou not haply say,
Truth needs no Colour with his Colour fix'd;
Beauty no Pencil, Beauty's Truth to lay;
But best is best, if never intermix'd.
Because he needs no Praise, wilt thou be dumb?
Excuse no Silence so, for't lies in thee
To make her much out-live a gilded Tomb,
And to be prais'd of Ages yet to be.
Then do thy Office, Muse, I teach thee how
To make her seem long hence, as she shows now.

Constant Affection.

To me, fair Love, you never can be old;
For as you were when first your Eye I ey'd,
Such seems your Beauty still. Three Winters cold
Have from the Forest hook three Summers Pride;
Three beauteous Springs to yellow Autumn turn'd,
In Proces of the Seasons, have I seen;
Three April Perfumes in three hot Junes burn'd,
Since first I saw you, fresh, which yet are green.
Ah! yet doth Beauty like a Dial-hand,
Steal from his Figure, and no Place perceiv'd;
So your sweet Hue, which, methinks, still does stand,
Hath Motion, and mine Eye may be deceiv'd.
For fear of which, hear this, thou Age unbred,
Ere you was born, was Beauty's Summer dead,

Let not my Love be call'd Idolatry,
Nor my Beloved as an Idol show;
Since all alike my Songs and Praises be,
To one, of one, still such, and ever so:

Kind
Poems on several Occasions.

Kind is my Love to Day, to Morrow kind,
Still constant in a wondrous Excellence;
Therefore my Verse to Constancy confin'd,
One thing expressing, leaves out Difference.
Fair, kind, and true, is all my Argument;
Fair, kind, and true, varying to other Words;
And in this Change is my Invention spent;
Three Themes in one, which wondrous Scope affords.

Fair, kind, and true, have often liv'd alone:
Which three, till now, have never fate in one.

When in the Chronicle of wasted Time,
I see Descriptions of the fairest Wights,
And Beauty making beautiful old Rhime,
In praise of Ladies dead, and lovely Knights;
Then in the Blazon of sweet Beauty's best,
Of Hand, of Foot, of Lip, of Eye, of Brow,
I see their antick Pen would have express'd
Even such a Beauty as you master now.
So all their Praises are but Prophecies
Of this our Time, all you prefiguring;
And, for they look'd but with divining Eyes,
They had not still enough your Worth to sing:
For we who now behold these present Days,
Have Eyes to wonder, but lack Tongues to praise.

Amazement.

My Love is strengthened, tho more weak in seeming;
I love not less, tho less the Show appear:
That Love is merchandiz'd, whose rich esteeming
The Owner's Tongue doth publish every where.
Our Love was new, and then but in the Spring,
When I was wont to greet it in my Lays;
As Philomel in Summer's front doth sing,
And stops his Pipe in growth of riper Days.
Not that the Summer is less pleasant now,
Than when her mournful Hymns did hush the Night;

But
But that wild Musick burdens every Bough,
And Sweets grown common, lose their dear Delight.
Therefore like her I sometime hold my Tongue,
Because I would not dull you with my Song.

Alack! what Poverty my Muse brings forth!
That having such a Scope to show her Pride,
The Argument all bare, is of more Worth,
Than when it hath my added Praise beside.
Oh! blame me not, if I no more can write!
Look in your Glass, and there appears a Face,
That overgoes my blunt Invention quite,
Dulling my Lines, and doing me Disgrace.
Were it not sinful then, striving to mend,
To marr the Subject that before was well?
For to no other pass my Verses tend,
Than of your Graces, and your Gifts to tell;
   And more, much more, than in my Verse can fit,
   Your own Glass shows you, when you look in it.

A Lover's Excuse for his long Absence.

Oh! never say that I was false of Heart,
Tho Absence seem'd my Flame to qualify;
As easy might I from myself depart,
As from my Soul which in my Breast doth lie,
That is my Home of Love; if I have rang'd,
Like him that travels, I return again
Just to the Time, not with the Time exchang'd;
So that myself bring Water for my Stain.
Never believe, tho in my Nature reigned
All Frailties, that besiege all kinds of Blood,
That it could so preposterously be stain'd,
To leave for nothing all thy Sum of Good:
   For nothing this wide Universe I call,
   Save thou, my Rose, in it thou art my All.

Alas! 'tis true, I have gone here and there;
And made myself a Motley to thy View;
Poems on several Occasions.

God's mine own Thoughts, fold cheap what is most dear;
Made old Offences of Affections new.
Most true it is, that I have look'd on Truth
Askance and strangely: But by all above,
These Blemishes gave my Heart another Youth,
And worst Assays prov'd thee my best of Love.
Now all is done, have what I shall have no End,
Mine Appetite I never more will grind
On newer Proof, to try an older Friend,
A God in Love, to whom I am confin'd.
Then give me welcome, next my Heaven the best,
Even to thy pure and most most loving Breast.

A Complaint.

Oh! for my sake do you with Fortune chide
The guilty Goddess of my harmless Deeds;
That did not better for my Life provide,
Than publick Means which publick Manners breeds.
Thence comes it, that my Name receives a Brand,
And almost thence my Nature is subdued
To what it works in, like the Dyer's Hand.
Pity me then, and with I were renew'd,
Whilst like a willing Patient I will drink
Potions of Epsel 'gainst my strong Infection,
No Bitterness, that I will bitter think,
Nor double Penance to correct Correction.
Pity me then, dear Friend, and I assure ye,
E'en that your Pity is enough to cure me.

Your Love and Pity doth th' Impression fill,
Which vulgar Scandal stamp'd upon my Brow;
For what care I who calls me well or ill,
So you o'er-skreen my bad, my good allow?
You are my All, the World and I must strive,
To know my Shames and Praises from your Tongue;
None else to me, nor I to none alive,
That my steel'd Sense or changes right or wrong.
Self-Flattery of her Beauty.

SINCE I left you mine Eye is in my Mind,
And that which governs me to go about,
Doth part his Function, and is partly blind;
Seems seeing, but effectually is out.
For it no Form delivers to the Heart
Of Birds, or Flower, or Shape, which it doth lack;
Of his quick Objects hath the Mind no Part,
Nor his own Vision holds what it doth catch.
For if it see the rud’st or gentlest Sight,
The most sweet Favour or deformedst Creature,
The Mountain or the Sea, the Day or Night,
The Crow or Dove, it shapes them to your Feature:
Incapable of more, replete with you;
My most true Mind thus maketh mine untrue.

Or whether doth my Mind, being crown’d with you,
Drink up the Monarch’s Plague, this Flattery?
Or whether shall I say mine Eye faith true,
And that your Love taught it this Alchemy?
To make of Monsters, and things indigelt,
Such Cherubims as your sweet self resemble;
Creating every Bad a perfect Beest;
As fast as Objects to his Beams assemble?
Oh! ’tis the first, ’tis Flattery in my seeing,
And my great Mind most kindly drinks it up;
Mine Eye well knows what with his Gust is ’greeing,
And to his Palate doth prepare the Cup.
If it be poison’d, ’tis the lesser Sin,
That mine Eye loves it, and doth first begin.
Poems on several Occasions. 213

Those Lines, that I before have writ, do lye,
E'en those that said I could not love you dearer:
Yet then my Judgment knew no Reason why,
My most full Flame should afterwards burn clearer.
But reck'ning Time, whose million Accidents
Creep in 'twixt Vows, and change Decrees of Kings,
Tan sacred Beauty, blunt the sharp'ft Intents,
Divert strong Minds to th' Course of alt'ring Things:
Alas! why fearing of Time's Tyranny,
Might I not then say, now I love you best,
When I was certain o'er Incertainty,
Crowning the present, doubting of the rest?
Love is a Babe, then might I not say so,
To give full Growth to that which still doth grow?

A Trial of Love's Constancy.

A curse me thus; that I have scantled all,
Wherein I should your great Deserts repay.
Forgot upon your dearest Love to call,
Whereby all Bonds do tie me day by day;
That I have frequent been with unknown Minds,
And given to Time your own dear purchas'd Right;
That I have hoisted Sails to all the Winds,
Which should transport me farthest from your Sight.
Book both my Wilfulness and Error down,
And on just Proof surmise, accumulate;
Bring me within the Level of your Frown,
But shoot not at me in your wakened Hate:
Since my Appeal says, I did strive to prove
The Constancy and Virtue of your Love.

Like as you make your Appetites more keen,
With eager Compounds we our Palate urge;
As to prevent our Maladies unseen,
We ficken, to shun Sickness, when we purge:
Even so being full of your near cloying Sweetness,
To bitter Sauces did I frame my Feeding;
And sick of Welfare, found a kind of Meekness,
To be diseas'd ere that there was true Needing.

Thus
214 Poems on several Occasions.
Thus Policy in Love, t anticipate
The IIs that were not, grew to Faults assured,
And brought to Medicine a healthful State,
Which Rank of Goodness would by Ill be cured.
But thence I learn, and find the Lesson true,
Drugs poison him that so fell sick of you.

What Potions have I drunk of Siren Tears,
Distill'd from Limbecks soul as Hell within?
Applying Fears to Hopes, and Hopes to Fears,
Still losing when I saw my self to win.
What wretched Errors hath my Heart committed,
Whilst it hath thought it self so blessed never?
How have mine Eyes out of their Spheres been fitted,
In the Distraction of this madding Fever?
Oh! Benefit of Ill! now I find true,
That Better is by Evil still made better;
And ruin'd Love, when it is built anew,
Grows fairer than at first, more strong, far greater.
So I return Rebuke to my Content,
And gain by Ills thrice more than I have spent.

A good Construction of his Love's Unkindness.

That you were once unkind befriends me now;
And for that Sorrow, which I then did feel,
Needs must I under my Transgression bow,
Unless my Nerves were Brass or hammer'd Steel.
For if you were by my Unkindness shaken,
As I by yours, y'have pass'd a Hell of Time;
And I a Tyrant have no leisure taken,
To weigh how once I suffer'd in your Crime.
Oh! that our Night of Woe might have remembred
My deepest Sense, how hard true Sorrow hits,
And soon to you, as you to me then tendered
The humble Salve, which wounded Bosoms fits!
But that your Trespass now becomes a Fee,
Mine ransoms yours, and yours must ransom me.

Error
Poems on several Occasions.

Error in Opinion.

'TIS better to be vile than vile esteem'd,
When not to be, receives Reproach of being;
And the just Pleasure lost, which is so deem'd,
Not by our feeling, but by others seeing.
For why should others false adulterate Eyes
Give Salutation to my sportive Blood?
Or on my Frailties, why are fraiher Spies;
Which in their Wills count bad what I think good?
No, I am that I am, and they that level
At my Abuses, reckon up their own;
I may be freight, tho they themselves be bevel;
By their rank Thoughts my Deeds must not be shown;
'Unles this general Evil they maintain,
All Men are bad, and in their Badness reign.

Upon the Receipt of a Table-Book from his Mistress.

THY Gift, thy Tables, are within my Brain,
Full character'd with a lasting Memory,
Which shall above that idle Rank remain,
Beyond all Date, even to Eternity;
Or at the least, so long as Brain and Heart
Have Faculty by Nature to subsist;
Till each to raz'd Oblivion yield his Part
Of thee, thy Record never can be mist.
That poor Retention could not so much hold;
Nor need I Tally's thy deare Love to score;
Therefore to give them from me, was I bold
To trust those Tables that receive thee more;
To keep an Adjunct to remember thee,
Were to import Forgetfulness in me.
A Vow.

No, Time! thou shalt not boast that I do change,
Thy Pyramids built up with newer Might,
To me are nothing novel, nothing strange;
They are but Dregsings of a former Sight.
Our Dates are brief, and therefore we admire
What thou dost foist upon us that is old;
And rather make them born to our Desire,
Than think that we before have heard them told.
Thy Registers and thee I both defy,
Not wondering at the present nor the past;
For thy Records, and what we see doth lye,
Made more or less by thy continual Haste.
    This I do vows, and this shall ever be;
    I will be true, despite thy Scithe and thee.

Love's Safety.

If my dear Love were but the Child of State,
    It might for Fortune's Bastard be un-father'd;
As subject to Time's Love, or to Time's Hate,
    Weeds among Weeds, or Flowers with Flowers gather'd.
No, it was builded far from Accident,
It suffers not in smiling Pomp, nor falls
Under the Blow of thrall'd Discontent,
Where to th' inviting Time our Fashion calls:
It fears not Policy, that Heretick,
Which works on Leaves of short number'd Hours,
But all alone stands hugely Politick,
That it nor grows with Heat, nor drowns with Showers.
    To this I witness call the Fools of Time,
    Which die for Goodness, who have liv'd for Crime.
An Intreaty for her Acceptance.

Where it ought to be, I bore the Canopy,
With my Extern the outward honouring;
Or laid great Bases for Eternity,
Which prove more short than Waste or Ruining.
Have I not seen Dwellers on Form and Favour,
Lose all, and more, by paying too much Rent
For Compound sweet, foregoing simple Savour?
Pitiful Thrivers in their gazing spent.
No, let me be obsequious in thy Heart,
And take thou my Oblation poor but free,
Which is not mix'd with Seconds, knows no Art,
But mutual Render, only me for thee.
Hence thou suborn'd. Informer! a true Soul,
When most impeach'd, stands least in thy Controul.

Upon her playing on the Virginals.

How oft when thou thy Musick, Musick-play'st,
Upon that blessed Wood, whose Motion sounds
With thy sweet Fingers, when thou gently sway'st
The witty Concord that mine Ear confounds;
Do I envy those Jacks that nimble leap,
To kiss the tender Inward of thy Hand,
Whilst my poor Lips, which should that Harvest reap,
At the Wood's Boldness, by thee blushing stand.
To be so tickled they would change their State,
And Situation with those dancing Chips,
O'er whom their Fingers walk with gentle Gate,
Making dead Wood more blest than living Lips.
Since saucy Jacks so happy are in this,
Give them thy Fingers, me thy Lips to kiss.
Immoderate Lust.

TH' Expence of Spirit in a Waste of Shame,
Is Lust in Action; and till Action, Lust
Is perjur'd, mur'drous, bloody, full of Blame,
Savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust;
Injoy'd no sooner, but despis'd straight,
Past Reason hunted, and no sooner had,
Past Reason hated as a swallow'd Bait,
On purpose laid to make the Taker mad.
Made in Pursuit and in Possession so,
Had, having, and in quest, to have extreme,
A Bliss in proof, and proud, and very Woe;
Before, a Joy propos'd; behind, a Dream.
All this the World well knows, yet none knows well
To shun the Heaven that leads Men to this Hell.

In praise of her Beauty, tho black.

IN the old Age Black was not counted Fair,
Or if it were, it bore not Beauty's Name:
But now is Black Beauty's successive Heir,
And Beauty slander'd with a Bajtard Shame:
For since each Hand hath put on Nature's Power,
Fairing the Foul with Art's false borrow'd Face,
Sweet Beauty hath no Name, no holy Bower,
But is profan'd; if not, lives in Disgrace.
Therefore my Mistress' Eyes are Raven black,
Her Eyes so suited, and they Mourners seem,
At such who not born fair, no Beauty lack,
Slandering Creation with a false Esteem:
Yet so they mourn, becoming of their Woe,
That every Tongue says Beauty should look so.

My Mistress' Eyes are nothing like the Sun,
Coral is far more red than her Lips red;
If Snow be white, why then her Breasts are dun;
If Hairs be Wires, black Wires grow on her Head.
I have seen Roses, damask, red, and white;
But no such Roses see I in her Cheeks:
And in some Perfumes there is more Delight,
Than in the Breath that from my Mistresses reeks.
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know,
That Music hath a far more pleasing Sound:
I grant I never saw a Goddess go;
My Mistress, when she walks, treads on the Ground:
And yet, by Heaven, I think my Love as rare
As any she, belied with false compare.

Thou art tyrannous, so thou art,
As those whose Beauties proudly make them cruel;
For well thou know'st to my dear doting Heart,
Thou art the fairest, and most precious Jewel.
Yet in good Faith some say that thee behold,
Thy Face hath not the Power to make Love groan;
To say they err, I dare not be so bold,
Altho' I swear it to my self alone.
And to be sure that is not false I swear;
A thousand Groans, but thinking on thy Face,
One on another's Neck do witness bear:
Thy Black is fairest in my Judgment's Place.
In nothing art thou black, save in thy Deeds,
And thence this Slander, as I think, proceeds.

Thine Eyes I love, and they as pitying me,
Knowing thy Heart torments me with Dibdian,
Have put on black, and loving Mourners be,
Looking with pretty Ruth upon my Pain.
And truly not the Morning-Sun of Heaven
Better becomes the grey Cheeks of the East;
Nor that full Star that ushers in the Even,
Doth half that Glory to the sober West,
As those two mourning Eyes become thy Face:
Oh! let it then as well be seen thy Heart.
To mourn for me, since Mourning doth thee grace,
And fute thy Pity like in every Part.
Then will I swear Beauty her self is black,
And all they foul that thy Completion lack.
Unkind Abuse.

Befrew that Heart that makes my Heart to groan,
For that deep Wound it gives my Friend and me;
Is't not enough to torture me alone,
But Slave to Slavery my sweetest Friend must be?
Me from my self thy cruel Eye hath taken,
And my next self thou harder haft engrofs'd;
Of him, my self, and thee I am forfaken,
A Torment thrice three-fold thus to be crofs'd.
Prison my Heart in thy steel Bosom's Ward,
But then my Friend's Heart let my poor Heart bail;
Whoe'er keeps me, let my Heart be his Guard,
Thou canst not then use Rigour in my Jail.
And yet thou wilt, for I being pent in thee,
Perforce am thine, and all that is in me.

So now I have confess that he is thine,
And I my self am mortgag'd to thy Will;
My self I'll forfeit, so that other mine
Thou wilt restore to me, my Comfort still.
But thou wilt not, nor he will not be free,
For thou art covetous, and he is kind;
He learn'd, but Surety-like to write for me,
Under that Bond that him as faft doth bind.
The Statute of thy Beauty thou wilt take,
Thou Usurer, that put'st forth all to use;
And sue a Friend, came Debtor for my fake,
So him I lose thro' my unkind Abuse.

Him have I lost, thou hast both him and me;
He pays the whole, and yet I am not free.

Love-Suit.

Whoever hath her Will, thou haft thy Will,
And Will to boot, and Will in over-pluss;
More than enough am I that vex thee still,
To thy sweet Will making addition thus.
Poems on several Occasions. 221

Wilt thou, whose Will is large and spacious,
Not once vouchsafe to hide my Will in thine?
Shall Will in others seem right gracious,
And in my Will no fair Acceptance shine?
The Sea all Water, yet receives Rain still,
And in abundance addeth to his Store;
So thou being rich in Will, add to thy Will,
One Will of mine, to make thy large Will more.
Let no unkind, no fair Beseechers kill,
Think all but one, and me in that one Will.

If thy Soul check thee that I come so near,
Swear to thy blind Soul that I was thy Will;
And Will, thy Soul knows, is admitted there;
Thus far for Love, my Love-Suit sweet fulfil.
Will will fulfil the Treasure of thy Love,
I fill it full with Wills, and my Will one:
In things of great receipt with ease we prove,
Among a Number one is reckon'd none.

Then in the Number let me pass untold,
Tho in thy Store's Account I one must be;
For nothing hold me, so it please thee hold
That Nothing Me, a Some-thing sweet to thee.
Make but my Name thy Love, and love that still,
And then thou lov'lt me, for my Name is Will.

His Heart wounded by her Eye.

Thou blind Fool, Love, what dost thou to mine Eyes,
That they behold, and see not what they see?
They know what Beauty is, see where it lies;
Yet what the best is, take the worst to be.
If Eyes corrupt by over-partial Looks,
Be anchor'd in the Bay where all Men ride;
Why of Eyes Fallhood hast thou forged Hooks,
Whereto the Judgment of my Heart is ty'd?

L 3

Why
222 Poems on several Occasions.

Why should my Heart think that a several Plot,
Which my Heart knows the wide World's common Place?
Or mine Eyes seeing this, say this is not
To put fair Truth upon so foul a Face;
   In things right true my Heart and Eyes have err'd,
   And to this false Plague are they now transferr'd.

O! call not me to justify the Wrong,
That thy Unkindness lays upon my Heart;
Wound me not with thine Eye, but with thy Tongue;
Use Power with Power, and slay me not by Art:
Tell me thou lov'st elsewhere; but in my sight,
Dear Heart forbear to glance thine Eye aside;
What need'st thou wound with Cunning, when thy Might
Is more than my o'er-pret Defence can bide?
Let me excuse thee; ah! my Love well knows,
Her pretty Looks have been my Enemies,
And therefore from my Face she turns my Foes,
That they elsewhere might dart their Injuries.
   Yet do not so, but since I am near slain,
   Kill me out-right with Looks, and rid my Pain.

Be wise as thou art cruel, do not press
My tongue-ty'd Patience with too much Disdain:
Left Sorrow lend me Words, and Words express
The manner of my Pity-wanting Pain.
If I might teach thee Wit, better it were,
Tho' not to love, yet love to tell me so:
As tete fiek Men, when their Deaths be near,
No News but Health from their Physicians know.
For if I should despair, I should grow mad,
And in my Madness might speak ill of thee;
Now this ill-wresting World is grown so bad,
Mad Slanderers by mad Ears believed be.
   That I may not be so, nor thou bely'd,
   Bear thine Eyes strait, tho' thy proud Heart go wide.
A Protestantion.

IN Faith I do not love thee with mine Eyes,
For they in thee a thousand Errors note;
But 'tis my Heart that loves what they despise,
Who in despite of View is pleas'd to dote.
Nor are mine Ears with thy Tongue's Tune delighted,
Nor tender feeling to base Touches prone,
Nor Taste, nor Smell desire to be invited
To any sensual Feast with thee alone:
But my five Wits, nor my five Senses can
Dissuade one foolish Heart from serving thee;
Who leaves unwary'd the Likeness of a Man,
Thy proud Heart's Slave and Vassal Wretch to be:
Only my Plague thus far I count my Gain,
That she that makes me sin, rewards my Pain.

Love is my Sin, and my dear Virtue, Hate;
Hate of Sin, grounded on a sinful Loving:
O! but with mine, compare thou thine own State,
And thou shalt find it merits not reproving:
Or if it do, not from those Lips of thine,
That have profan'd their Scarlet Ornaments,
And seal'd false Bonds of Love as oft as mine,
Robb'd others Beds Revenues of their Rents.
Be it lawful, I love thee, as thou lov'st thine,
Whom thine Eyes woo, as mine importune thee;
Root Pity in thy Heart, that when it grows,
Thy Pity may deserve to pity'd be.
If thou dost seek to have what thou dost hide,
By Self-example may'st thou be deny'd!

L 4

An
An Allusion.

LO! as a careful Housewife runs to catch
One of her feather'd Creatures broke away;
Sets down her Babe, and makes all swift Dispatch,
In pursuit of the Thing she would have stay:
Whilst her neglected Child holds her in Chace,
Cries to catch her, whose busy Care is bent
To follow that which flies before her Face;
Not prizing her poor Infant's Discontent.
So run'st thou after that which flies from thee,
Whilst I thy Babe chase thee a-far behind;
But if thou catch thy Hope, turn back to me,
And play the Mother's Part, kiss me, be kind.
So will I pray, that thou may'st have thy Will,
If thou turn back, and my loud Crying still.

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Life and Death.

THOSE Lips that Love's own Hand did make,
Breath'd forth the Sound that said, I hate,
To me that languish'd for her sake:
But when she saw my woful State,
Strait in her Heart did Mercy come;
Chiding that Tongue, that, ever sweet,
Was us'd in giving gentle Doom,
And taught it thus a-new to greet:
I hate, she alter'd with an End
That follow'd it, as gentle Day
Doth follow Night, who like a Fiend,
From Heaven to Hell is flown away.
I hate, from Hate away she threw,
And say'd my Life, saying not you.
A Consideration of Death.

Poor Soul! the Center of my sinful Earth,
My sinful Earth these rebel Powers that thee array,
Why dost thou pine within and suffer Death,
Painting thy outward Walls in costly Clay?
Why so large Cost, having so short a Leafe,
Dost thou upon thy faded Mansion spend?
Shall Worms, Inheritors of this Excess,
Eat up thy Charge? Is this thy Body’s End?
Then, Soul, live thou upon thy Servant’s Loss,
And let that pine to aggravate thy Store;
Buy Terms Divine in selling Hours of Dross;
Within be fed, without be rich no more.
So shalt thou feed on Death, that feeds on Men,
And Death once dead, there’s no more dying then.

Immoderate Passion.

My Love is as a Fever, longing still
For that which longer nurseth the Disease;
Feeding on that which doth preserve the Ill,
Th’ uncertain sickly Appetite to please.
My Reason, the Physician to my Love,
Angry that his Prescriptions are not kept,
Hath left me, and I desperate now approve;
Desire is Death, which Physick did except.
Past Cure I am, now Reason is past Cure;
And frantick mad with evermore unrest,
My Thoughts and my Discourse as Madmens are,
At random from the Truth vainly express’d.
For I have sworn thee fair, and thought thee bright,
Who art as black as Hell, as dark as Night.

L 5  Love’s
Love's Powerful Subtlety.

O me! what Eyes hath Love put in my Head,
Which have no Correspondence with true Sight!
Or if they have, where is my Judgment fled,
That censures falsely what they see aright?
If that be fair whereon my false Eyes dote,
What means the World to say it is not so?
If it be not, then Love doth well denote,
Love's Eye is not so true as all Mens. No,
How can it? O how can Love's Eye be true,
That is so vex'd with Watching and with Tears?
No marvel then, tho' I mistake my View;
The Sun it self sees not, till Heaven clears,
O! cunning Love! with Tears thou keep'st me blind,
Left Eyes well-seeing thy soul Faults should find.

Can't thou, O! Cruel! say I love thee not?
When I against my self with thee partake?
Do I not think on thee, when I forgot
All of my self, all Tyrant for thy sake?
Who hatest thou, that I do call my Friend?
On whom frown'st thou that I do fawn upon?
Nay, if thou low'rt on me, do I not spend
Revenge upon my self with present Moan?
What Merit do I in my self respect,
That is so proud thy Service to despise;
When all my best doth worship thy Defect,
Commanded by the Motion of thine Eyes?

But, Love, hate on; for now I know thy Mind,
Those that can see, thou lov'st; and I am blind.

Oh! from what Power hast thou this powerful Might,
With Infusificency my Heart to sway;
To make me give the Lye to my true Sight,
And swear that Brightness doth not grace the Day?
Whence hast thou this becoming of things ill,
That in the very Refuse of thy Deeds,

There
There is such Strength and Warrantise of Skill,
That in my Mind thy work all beets exceeds?
Who taught thee how to make me love thee more,
The more I heat and see just Caus' of Hate?
Oh! tho I love what others do abhor,
With others thou should'st not abhor my State.
If thy Unworthiness rais'd Love in me,
More worthy I to be belov'd of thee.

Retaliation.

SO oft have I invok'd thee for my Muse,
And found such fair Assistance in my Verse,
As every Alien Pen hath got my Use,
And under thee their Poesy disperse.
Thine Eyes that taught the Dumb on high to sing,
And heavy Ignorance aloft to fly,
Have added Feathers to the Learned's Wing,
And given Grace a double Majesty:
Yet be most proud of that, which I compile,
Whose Influence is thine, and born of thee;
In others Works thou dost but mend the Stile,
And Arts with thy sweet Graces graced be:
But thou art all my Art, and dost advance,
As high as Learning, my rude Ignorance.

Whilst I alone did call upon thy Aid,
My Verse alone had all thy gentle Grace;
But now my gracious Numbers are decay'd,
And my sick Mule doth give another place.
I grant (sweet Love !) thy lovely Argument
Deserves the Travail of a worthier Pen;
Yet what of thee thy Poet doth invent.
He robs thee of, and pays it thee again;
He lends thee Virtue, and he stole that Word;
From thy Behaviour, Beauty doth he give,
And found it in thy Cheek. He can afford
No Praise to thee, but what in thee doth live.
Then thank him not for that which he doth lay,
Since what he owes thee, thou thy self dost pay.
228 Poems on several Occasions.

Sun-Set.

That time of Year thou may'st in me behold,
When yellow Leaves, or none, or few do hang
Upon those Boughs, which shake against the Cold,
Bare ruin'd Quires, where late the sweet Birds sang.
In me thou seest the Twilight of such Day,
As after Sun-Set fadeth in the West;
Which by and by black Night doth take away;
Death's second self that seals up all in Rest.
In me thou seest the Glowing of such Fire,
That on the Ashes of his Youth doth lie,
As the Death-bed whereon it must expire,
Consum'd with that which it was nourish'd by.
'Tis thou perceiv'st, which makes thy Love more strong.
To love that well, which thou must leave ere long.

Thy Glass will shew thee how thy Beauties wear:
Thy Dial how thy precious Minutes waste;
The vacant Leaves thy Mind's Imprint will bear,
And of this Book this Learning may'st thou taste.
The Wrinkles, which thy Glass will truly show,
Of mouthed Graves will give the Memory:
Thou by thy Dial's shady Stealth may'st know
Time's theevish Progress to Eternity.
Look what thy Memory cannot contain,
Commit to these waste Blacks, and thou shalt find
Those Children nurs'd, deliver'd from thy Brain,
To take a new Acquaintance of thy Mind.
These Offices, so oft as thou wilt look,
Shall profit thee, and much enrich thy Book.

A Monument to Fame.

Not mine own Fears, nor the prophetick Soul
Of the wide World, dreaming on things to come,
Can yet the Lease of my true Love controul,
Suppos'd as Forfeit to a confin'd Doom.

The
Poems on several Occasions.

The mortal Moon hath her Eclipse endur'd,
And the sad Augurs mock their own Preface:
Uncertainties now crown themselves assur'd,
And Peace proclaims Olives of endless Age.
Now with the Drops of this most balmy time,
My Love looks fresh, and Death to me subscribes;
Since spite of him I'll live in this poor Rhime,
While he insults o'er dull and speechless Tribes.
And thou in this shalt find thy Monument,
When Tyrants Crefts and Tombs of Brass are spent.

What's in the Brain, that Ink may character,
Which hath notfigur'd to thee my true Spirit?
What's new to speake, what now to register,
That may express my Love, or thy dear Merit?
Nothing, sweet Love! but yet like Prayers Divine,
I must each Day say o'er the very same;
Counting no old thing old, thou mine, I thine,
E'en as when first I hallow'd thy fair Name.
So that eternal Love, in Love's fresh Cape,
Weighs not the Dust and Injuries of Age,
Nor gives to necessary Wrinkles place,
But makes Antiquity for aye his Page:
Finding the first Conceit of Love there bred,
Where Time and outward Form would shew it dead.

Perjury.

Love is too young to know what Conscience is,
Yet who knows not Conscience is born of Love?
Then gentle Cheater urge not my Amifs,
Left guilty of my Faults thy sweet self prove.
For thou betraying me, I do betray
My nobler Part to my gross Body's Treason;
My Soul doth tell my Body that he may
Triumph in Love, Flesh stays no farther Reason:
But rising at thy Name doth point out thee,
As his triumphant Prize; proud of this Pride,
He
230 Poems on several Occasions.
He is contented thy poor Drudge to be,
To stand in thy Affairs, fall by thy Side.

No want of Conscience hold it, that I call
Her Love, for whose dear Love I rise and fall.

In loving thee, thou know'st I am forsworn,
But thou art twice forsworn to me Love swearing;
In Act thy Bed-Vow broke, and new Faith torn,
In vowing new Hate after new Love bearing.

But why of two Oaths Breach do I accuse thee,
When I break twenty? I am perjur'd most;
For all my Vows are Oaths but to misuse thee;
And all my honest Faith in thee is lost.

For I have sworn deep Oaths of thy deep Kindness;
Oaths of thy Love, thy Truth, thy Constancy;
And to enlighten thee, gave Eyes to Blindness;
Or made them swear against the thing they see.

For I have sworn thee fair; more perjur'd I,
To swear against the Truth so foul a Lye.

The Tale of Cephalus and Procris.

Beneath Hymettus' Hill, well cloth'd with Flowers,
A holy Well her soft Springs gently pours;
Where stands a Cops, in which the Wood-Nymphs throne,
(No Wood) it rather seems a slender Grove.
The humble Shrubs and Bushes hide the Grass,
Here Laurel, Rosemary, here Myrtle was:
Here grew thick Box, and Tam'risk, that excels,
And made a mere Confusion of sweet Smells:
The Trifloly, the Pine; and on this Heath
Stands many a Plant that feels cold Zephyr's Breath.
Here the young Cephalus, tir'd in the Chace,
Us'd his Repose and Reft alone t' embrace;
And where he sat, these words he would repeat,
'T Come Air, sweet Air, come cool my mighty Heat!

Come
Poems on several Occasions.

Come gentle Air, I never will forsake thee,
I'll hug thee thus, and in my Bosom take thee.
Some double duteous Tell-tale hapt to hear this,
And to his jealous Wife doth strait-way bear this;
Which Procris hearing, and withal the Name
Of Air, sweet Air, which he did oft proclaim,
She stands confounded, and amaz'd with Grief,
By giving this fond Tale too sound Belief.
And looks, as do the Trees by Winter nipt,
Whom Frost and Cold of Fruit and Leaves half stript.
She bends like Corveil, when too rank it grows,
Or when the ripe Fruits clog the Quince-tree Boughs.
But when she comes t' herself, she tears
Her Garments, Eyes, her Cheeks, and Hairs;
And then she starts, and to her Feet applies her,
Then to the Woods (stark Wood) in rage she hies her.
Approaching somewhat near, her Servants they
By her Appointment in a Valley stay;
While she alone, with creeping Paces, steals
To take the Strumpet, whom her Lord conceals.
What mean'st thou, Procris, in these Groves to hide thee?
What Rage of Love doth to this Madness guide thee?
Thou hop'st the Air he calls, in all her Bravery,
Will strait approach, and thou shalt see their Knavery.
And now again it irks her to be there,
For such a killing Sight her Heart will tear.
No Truce can with her troubled Thoughts dispense,
She would not now be there, nor yet be thence.
Behold the Place her jealous Mind foretels,
Here do they use to meet, and no where else:
The Grass is laid, and see their true Impression,
Even here they lay! Ay, here was their Transgression.
A Body's Print she saw, it was his Seat,
Which makes her faint Heart 'gainst her Ribs to beat.
Phoebus the lofty Eastern Hill had scal'd,
And all moist Vapours from the Earth exhal'd.
Now in his Noon-tide Point he shineth bright,
It was the middle Hour, 'twixt Noon and Night.
Behold young Cephalus draws to the Place,
And with the Fountain-Water sprinks his Face.

Procris
Poems on several Occasions.

Procris is hid, upon the Grass he lies,
And come sweet Zephyr, come sweet Air he cries.
She sees her Error now from where he stood,
Her Mind returns to her, and her fresh Blood;
Among the Shrubs and Briars she moves and rustles,
And the injurious Boughs away she jutters,
Intending, as he lay there to repose him,
Nimbly to run, and in her Arms inclose him.
He quickly casts his Eye upon the Bush,
Thinking therein some savage Beast did rush;
His Bow he bends, and a keen Shaft he draws:
Unhappy Man, what dost thou? Stay, and pause,
It is no brute Beast thou wouldst 'revea of Life;
O! Man unhappy! thou hast slain thy Wife!
O Heaven! she cries, O help me! I am slain;
Still doth thy Arrow in my Wound remain.
Yet tho by timelesse Farse my Bones here lie,
It glads me most, that I no Cuck-Quean die.
Her Breath (thus in the Arms she most affected)
She breathes into the Air (before suspected)
The whilst he lifts her Body from the Ground,
And with his Tears doth wash her bleeding Wound.

Cupid's Treachery.

Cupid laid by his Brand, and fell asleep;
A Maid of Dian's this Advantage found,
And his Love-kindling Fire did quickly steep.
In a cold Valley-Fountain of that Ground:
Which borrow'd from his holy Fire of Love,
A dateless lively Heat still to endure,
And grew a Seething Bath, which yet Men prove
Against strange Maladies a sovereign Cure.
But at my Mistress' Eyes Love's Brand new fired,
The Boy for Trial needs would touch my Breast;
I sick withal the Help of Bath desired,
And thither hied a sad distemper'd Guest:
But found no Cure, the Bath for my help lies;
Where Cupid got new Fire, my Mistress' Eyes.
Poems on several Occasions. 233

The little Love-God lying once asleep,
Laid by his Side his Heart in flaming Brand,
Whilst many Nymphs that vow'd chaste Life to keep,
Came tripping by; but in her Maiden Hand,
The fairest Vatican took up that Fire,
Which many Legions of true Hearts had warm'd;
And so the General of hot Desire
Was sleeping, by a Virgin-Hand disarm'd.
This Brand she quenched in a cool Well by,
Which from Love's Fire took Heat perpetual,
Growing a Bath and healthful Remedy
For Men diseas'd; but I, my Mistress' Thrall,
Came there for Cure, and this by that I prove,
Love's Fire heats Water, Water cools not Love.

That Menelaus was the Cause of his own Wrongs.

When Menelaus from his House is gone,
Poor Helen is afraid to lie alone;
And to allay these Fears (lodg'd in her Breast)
In her warm Bosom she receives her Guest.
What Madness was this, Menelaus, say?
Thou art abroad, whilst in thy House doth stay,
Under the self-same Roof, thy Guest, and Love:
Madman! unto the Hawk thou trusts the Dove.
And who but such a Gull, would give to keep
Unto the Mountain-Wolf, full Folds of Sheep?
Helen is blameless, so is Paris too
And did what thou, or I my self would do.
The Fault is thine, I tell thee to thy Face,
By limiting these Lovers, Time and Place.
From thee the Seeds of all thy Wrongs are grown,
Whose Counsels have they follow'd but thine own?
Alack! what should they do? Abroad thou art,
At Home thou leav'st thy Guest to play thy Part.
To lie alone, the poor Queen is afraid,
In the next Room an amorous Stranger staid;
234 Poems on several Occasions.
Her Arms are open to embrace him, he falls in:
And, Paris, I acquit thee of the Sin.

And in another Place somewhat resembling this.

Orestes liked, but not loved dearly
Hermione, till he had lost her dearly.
Sad Menelaus! why dost thou lament
Thy late Mishaps? I prithee be content.
Thou know'ft the amorous Helen fair and sweet;
And yet without her didst thou fail to Crete.
And thou wast blithe, and merry all the way;
But when thou saw'st she was the Trojan's Prey,
Then wast thou mad for her, and for thy Life,
Thou canst not now one Minute want thy Wife.
So stout Achilles, when his lovely Bride,
Briseis, was dispos'd to great Atride,
Nor was he vainly mov'd, Atrides too.
Offer'd no more, than he of Force must do.
I should have done as much, to set her free;
Yet I (Heaven knows) am not so wise as he.

Vulcan was Jupiter's Smith,
an excellent Workman, on whom the
Poets father many rare Works,
among which I find this one.

Mars and Venus.

This Tale is blaz'd thro' Heaven, how once
un'ware,
Venus and Mars were took in Vulcan's Snare.
The God of War doth in his Brow discover
The perfect and true Pattern of a Lover.
Nor could the Goddes Venus be so cruel
To deny Mars (soft Kindness is a Jewel

In
Poems on several Occasions. 235

In any Woman, and becomes her well)
In this the Queen of Love doth most excel.
(Oh Heaven!) how often have they mockt and flouted
The Smith's Pott-foot (whilst nothing he misdoubted)
Made Jefts of him, and his begrimed Trade;
And his smoog'd Village, black with Coal-Dust made.
Mars, tickled with loud Laughter, when he saw
Venus like Vulcan limp, to halt and draw
One Foot behind another, with sweet Grace,
To counterfeit his lame uneven Pace.
Their Meetings first the Lovers hide with Fear
From every jealous Eye, and captious Ear.
The God of War, and Love's lascivious Dame,
In publick View were full of bashful Shame.
But the Sun spies, how this sweet Pair agree,
(O what, bright Phæbus, can be hid from thee?)
The Sun both sees and blabs the Sight forthwith,
And in all post he speeds to tell the Smith.
(O Sun!) what bad Examples dost thou show?
What thou in secret seest, must all Men know?
For Silence, ask a Bribe from her fair Treasure;
She'll grant thee that shall make thee swell with Pleasure.
The God, whose Face is smoog'd with Smoke and Fire,
Placeth about their Bed a Net of Wyar;
So quaintly made, that it deceives the Eye.
Strait (as he feigns) to Lennos he must hie.
The Lovers meet, where he the Train hath set,
And both lie fast catch'd in a wiery Net:
He calls the Gods, the Lovers naked sprall,
And cannot rise; the Queen of Love shews all.
Mars chafes, and Venus weeps, neither can flinch;
Grappled they lie, in vain they kick and wince.
Their Legs are one within another ty'd,
Their Hands so fast, that they can nothing hide.
Amongst these high Spectators, one by chance,
That saw them naked in this pitfall Dance,
Thus to himself said; If it tedious be,
Good God of War, bestow thy Place on me.
The History how the Minotaur was begot.

I doth of Cedars, and tall Trees stands full,
Where fed the Glory of the Herd, a Bull
Snow-white, save 'twixt his Horns one Spot there grew;
Save that one Stain, he was of milky hue.
This fair Steer did the Heifers of the Groves
Desire to bear, as Prince of all the Drovers.
But most Pasiphae, with adulterous Breath,
Envis the wanton Heifers to the Death.
'Tis said, that for this Bull the doting Lads
Did use to crop young Boughs, and mow fresh Grass;
Nor was the amorous Creian Queen afeard,
To grow a kind Companion to the Herd.
Thus thro' the Champian she is madly borne,
And a wild Bull to Minos gives the Horn.
'Tis not for Bravery he can love or loath thee,
Then why Pasiphae dost thou richly clothe thee?
Why should't thou thus thy Face and Looks prepare?
What mak'st thou with thy Glass ordering thy Hair?
Unless thy Glass could make thee seem a Cow;
But how can Horns grow on that tender Brow?
If Minos please thee, no Adulterer seek thee;
Or if thy Husband Minos do not like thee,
But thy lascivious Thoughts are still increas'd,
Deceive him with a Man, not with a Beast.
Thus by the Queen the wild Woods are frequented,
And leaving the King's Bed, she is contented
To use the Groves, borne by the Rage of Mind,
Even as a Ship with a full Eastern Wind.
Some of these Strumpet Heifers the Queen flew,
Her smoking Altars their warm Bloods imbrue;
Whilst by the sacrificing Priest she stands,
And gripes their trembling Entrails in her Hands:
At length, the Captain of the Herd beguil'd
With a Cow's-Skin, by curious Art compil'd,
The longing Queen obtains her full Desire,
And in her Infant's Form bewrays the Sire.

This
This Minotaur, when he came to Growth,  
was inclos'd in the Labyrinth, which  
was made by the curious Arts-master  
Dedalus, whose Tale likewise we thus  
pursue.

When Dedalus the Labyrinth had built,  
In which t'include the Queen Paphsae's Guilt,  
And that the Time was now expired full,  
T' inclose the Minotaur, half Man, half Bull:  
Kneeling, he says, Just Minos end my Moans,  
And let my native Soil intomb my Bones:  
Or if, dread Sovereign, I deserve no Grace,  
Look with a piteous Eye on my Son's Face;  
And grant me leave, from whence we are exil'd,  
Or pity me, if you deny my Child.

This, and much more, he speaks, but all in vain,  
The King both Son and Father will detain:  
Which he perceiving, says; Now, now, 'tis fit,  
To give the World Cause to admire my Wit:  
Both Land and Sea are watch'd by Day and Night;  
Nor Land nor Sea lies open to our Flight,  
Only the Air remains; then let us try  
To cut a Passage thro' the Air and fly.  

Love be auspicious in my Enterprize,  
I covet not to mount above the Skies:  
But make this Refuge, since I can prepare  
No Means to fly my Lord but thro' the Air.  
Make me immortal, bring me to the Brim  
Of the black Stygian Water Styx, I'll swim.  
Oh human Wit! thou canst invent much Ill,  
Thou searchest strange Arts: Who would think, by Skill,  
A heavy Man, like a light Bird, should stray,  
And thro' the empty Heavens find a way?
He placeth in just Order all his Quills,  
Whose Bottoms with resolved Wax he fills;  
Then binds them with a Line, and bring fast ty'd,  
He placeth them like Oars on either Side.
The tender Lad the downy Feathers blew,
And what his Father meant, he nothing knew.
The Wax he fasten'd, with the Strings he play'd,
Not thinking for his Shoulders they were made;
To whom his Father spake (and then look'd pale)
With these swift Ships, we to our Land must sail.
All Passages doth cruel Minos stop,
Only the empty Air he still leaves ope.
That way must we; the Land and the rough Deep
Doth Minos bar, the Air he cannot keep.
But in thy way, beware thou set no Eye
On the Sign Virgo, nor Bootes high:
Look not the black Orion in the Face,
That shakes his Sword, but just with me keep Pace.
Thy Wings are now in fast'ning, follow me,
I will before thee fly; as thou shalt see
Thy Father mount, or stoop, so I aread thee;
Make me thy Guard, and safely I will lead thee.
If we should soar too near great Phaebus' Seat,
The melting Wax will not endure the Heat:
Or if we fly too near the humid Seas,
Our moisten'd Wings we cannot shake with Ease.
Fly between both, and with the Gusts that rise,
Let thy light Body fail amidst the Skies.
And ever as his little Son he charms,
He fits the Feathers to his tender Arms:
And shews him how to move his Body light,
As Birds first teach their little young ones Flight.
By this he calls to Counsel all his Wits,
And his own Wings unto his Shoulders fits:
Being about to rise, he fearful quakes,
And in this new way his faint Body shakes.
First, ere he took his Flight, he kiss'd his Son,
Whilst by his Cheeks the brinsh Waters run.
There was a Hillock not so towering tall,
As lofty Mountains be, nor yet so small
To be with Valleys even, and yet a Hill;
From this, thus both attempt their uncouth Skill.
The Father moves his Wings, and with Respect
His Eyes upon his wandering Son reflect.
They bear a spacious Course, and the apt Boy,
Fearless of Harm, in his new Track doth joy,
And flies more boldly. Now upon them looks
The Fishermen, that angle in the Brooks;
And with their Eyes cast upward, frightened stand;
By this, is Samos Isle on their left hand;
Upon the right, Leb'inhos they forfike,
Astitale and the fishy Lake;
Shady Pachine full of Woods and Groves.
When the rash Youth, too bold in vent'ring, roves;
Loth is his Guide, and takes his Flight so high,
That the soft Wax against the Sun doth fry,
And the Cords slip that kept the Feathers fast;
So that his Arms have power upon no Blait.
He fearfully from the high Clouds looks down
Upon the lower Heavens, whose curl'd Waves frown
At his ambitious Height, and from the Skies
He sees black Night and Death before his Eyes.
Still melts the Wax, his naked Arms he shakes,
And thinking to catch hold, no hold he takes.
But now the naked Lad down headlong falls,
And by the way, he Father, Father, calls;
Help, Father, help, I die: and as he speaks,
A violent Surge his Course of Language breaks.
Th' unhappy Father (but no Father now)
Cries out aloud, Son Icarus where art thou?
Where art thou, Icarus, where dost thou fly?
Icarus where art? When lo, he may espy
The Feathers swim; aloud he doth exclaim:
The Earth his Bones, the Sea still bears his Name.

Achilles his Concealment of his Sex in the Court of Lycomedes.

Now from another World doth fail with Joy,
A welcome Daughter to the King of Troy.
The whilst the Grecians are already come,
(Mov'd with that general Wrong 'gainst Ilium)

Achilles
Poems on several Occasions.

Achilles in a Smock his Sex doth smoother,
And lays the blame upon his careful Mother.
What mak'st thou, great Achilles, teasing Wool,
When Pallas in a helm should clasp thy Skull?
What do these Fingers with fine Threds of Gold,
Which were more fit a warlike Shield to hold?
Why should that right Hand Rock or Tow contain,
By which the Trojan Hector must be slain?
Cast off thy loose Veils, and thy Armour take,
And in thy Hand the Spear of Pallas shake.
Thus Lady-like he with a Lady lay,
Till what he was, her Belly must bewray;
Yet was she forc'd (so should we all believe)
Not to be forc'd so, now her Heart would grieve.
When he should rise from her, still would she cry,
(For he had arm'd him, and his Rock laid by)
And with a soft Voice speak: Achilles stay,
It is too soon to rise, lie down I pray.
And then the Man that forc'd her, she would kiss:
What Force (Deidamia) call you this?

A Lover's Complaint.

From off a Hill, whose concave Womb rewarded
A plaintful Story from a list'ring Vale,
My Spirits 't attend this double Voice accorded,
And down I laid to lift the sad-tun'd Tale,
Ere long espied a fickle Maid full pale,
Tearing of Papers, breaking Rings a-twain,
Storming her Words with Sorrow's Wind and Rain:
Upon her Head a platted Hive of Straw,
Which fortify'd her Village from the Sun,
Whereon the Thought might think sometime it saw
The Carcase of a Beauty spent and done.
Time had not scathed all that Youth begun,
Nor Youth all quit; but spite of Heaven's fell Rage,
Some Beauty peep'd thro' Lattice of fear'd Age.
Of did she heave her Napkin to her Eyne,
Which on it had conceited Characters;
Laundring the silken Figures in the Brine,
That sealon'd Woe had pelleted in Tears;
And often reading what Contents it bears:
As often shrieking undistinguish'd Woe,
In Clamours of all size, both high and low.
Sometimes her level'd Eyes their Carriage ride,
As they did Battery to the Spheres intend;
Sometimes diverted, their poor Balls are ty'd
To th' orbed Earth; sometimes they do extend
Their View right on; anon their Gazes lend
To every place at once, and no where fix'd,
The Mind and Sight distraffectedly commix'd.
Her Hair, nor loose nor ty'd in formal Plat,
Proclaim'd in her a careless Hand of Pride;
For some untuck'd descended her shav'd Hat,
Hanging her pale and pined Cheek beside;
Some in her thredden Fillet still did ride,
And true to Bondage, would not break from thence,
Tho slackly braided in loose Negligence.
A thousand Favours from a Maund she drew,
Of Amber, Crystal, and of beaded Jet;
Which one by one she in a River throw'd,
Upon whose weeping Margent she was set,
Like Usury, applying Wet to Wet;
Or Monarch's Hands, that let not Bounty fall,
Where Want cries some, but where Excess begs all.
Of folded Schedules had she many a one,
Which she perus'd, sigh'd, tore, and gave the Flood;
Crack'd many a Ring of posied Gold and Bone,
Bidding them find their Sepulchers in Mud;
Found yet more Letters sadly penn'd in Blood,
With sleied Silk, sear and affectedly
Enswath'd and seal'd to curious Secrecy.
These often bath'd she in her fluxive Eyes,
And often kiss'd, and often gave a Tear;
Cry'd, O false Blood! thou Register of Lyes,
What unapproved Witness doth him bear!
Ink would have seen'd more black and damned here!
Poems on several Occasions.

This said, in top of Rage the Lines she rents,
Big Discontent so breaking their Contents.
A Reverend Man, that graz'd his Cartel nigh,
Sometime a Blunter, that the Ruffle knew
Of Court, of City, and had let go by
The swiftest Hours observed as they flew;
Towards this afflicted Fancy fastly drew:
And, privileg'd by Age, desires to know,
In brief, the Grounds and Motives of her Woe.
So slides he down upon his grained Bat,
And comely distant sits he by her side;
When he again desires her, being fat,
Her Grievance with his Hearing to divide;
If that from him there may be ought apply'd,
Which may her suffering Extasy affluage:
'Tis promis'd in the Charity of Age.
Father, she says, tho in me you behold
The injury of many a blasting Hour,
Let it not tell your Judgment I am old;
Not Age, but Sorrow, over me hath power:
I might as yet have been a spreading Flower,
Fresh to my self, if I had self-apply'd
Love to my self, and to no Love beside.
But woe is me! too early I attended
A youthful Suit; it was to gain my Grace;
O! one by Nature's Outwards so commend'd,
That Maidens Eyes stuck over all his Face;
Love lack'd a Dwelling, and made him her place;
And when in his fair Parts she did abide,
She was new lodg'd, and newly deify'd.
His browny Locks did hang in crooked Curls,
And every light Occasion of the Wind
Upon his Lips their silken Parcels hurls.
What's sweet to do, to do will apply find;
Each Eye that saw him did enchant the Mind:
For on his Vifage was in little drawn,
What Largeness thinks in Paradise was fawn.
Small shew of Man was yet upon his Chin,
His Phoænix Down began but to appear,
Like unshorn Velvet, on that termless Skin,
Whose bare out-bragg'd the web it seem'd to wear;
Yet shew'd his village by that coat most dear:
And nice affections wavering, stood in doubt
If best 'twere as it was, or best without.
His qualities were beauteous as his form,
For maiden-tongu'd he was, and thereof free:
Yet if men mov'd him, was he such a storm,
As of 'twixt May and April is to see,
When winds breathe sweet, unruly tho they be.
His rudeness so with his authoriz'd youth,
Did livery falseness in a pride of truth.
Well could he ride, and often men would say,
That horse his mettle from his rider takes;
Proud of subjection, noble by the sway,
What rounds, what bounds, what courte, what stop he
And controversy hence a question takes,
Whether the horse by him became his deed,
Or he his, manag'd by th' well-doing steed?
But quickly on this side the verdict went;
His real habitude gave life and grace
To appertainings and to ornament,
Accomplisht in himself, not in his case;
All aids themselves made fairer by their place;
Can for additions yet their purpose trim,
Piec'd not his grace, but were all grac'd by him.
So on the tip of his subduing tongue
All kind of arguments and questions deep;
All replication prompt, and reason strong.
For his advantage still did awake and sleep,
To make the weeper laugh, the laughers weep.
He had the dialect and different skill,
Catching all passions in his craft of will;
That he did in the general bosom reign
Of young, of old, and sexes both enchanted,
To dwell with him in thoughts, or to remain
In personal duty, following where he haunted,
Consent's bewitch'd, ere he desire have granted;
And dialogu'd for him what he would say,
Ask'd their own wills, and made their wills obey.
Many there were that did his picture get,
To serve their eyes, and in it put their mind;
244. Poems on several Occasions.
Like Fools that in th' Imagination set
The goodly Objects, which abroad they find,
Of Lands and Mansions, theirs in Thought assign'd;
And labouring, in moe Pleasures to bestow them,
Than the true gouty Landlord, who doth own them,
So many have, that never touch'd his Hand,
Sweetly suppos'd them Mistress of his Heart:
My woful self, that did in Freedom stand,
And was my own Fee Simple, not in part,
What with his Art in Youth, and Youth in Art,
Threw my Affections in his charmed Power,
Reserv'd the Stalk, and gave him all my Flower.
Yet did I not, as some my Equals did,
Demand of him, nor being desir'd, yielded:
Finding my self in Honour so forbid,
With safest Distance I my Honour shielded:
Experience for me many Bulwarks builded
Of Proofs new bleeding, which remain'd the Foil
Of this false Jewel, and his amorous Spoil.
But ah! whoever thunn'd by Precedent
The destin'd ill, she must her self assay?
Or forc'd Examples, 'gainst her own Content,
To put the by-past Perils in her way?
Counsel may stop a while what will not stay:
For when we rage, Advice is often seen,
By blunting us, to make our Wits more keen.
Nor gives it Satisfaction to our Blood,
That we must curb it upon others Proof:
To be forbid the Sweets that seem so good,
For fear of Harms, that preach in our behoof.
O Appetite! from Judgment stand aloof.
The one a Palate hath, that needs will taste,
The Reason weep, and cry, it is thy laft.
For further I could say this Man's untrue,
And knew the Patterns of his foul beguiling,
Heard where his Plants in others Orchards grew,
Saw how Deceits were gilded in his smiling,
Knew Vows were ever Brokers to defiling;
Thought Characters and Words merely but Art,
And Bastards of his foul adult'rate Heart.
And
Poems on several Occasions. 245

And long upon these Terms I held my City,
Till thus he 'gan besiege me: Gentle Maid,
Have of my suffering Youth some feeling Pity,
And be not of my holy Vows afraid;
What's to you sworn, to none was ever said.
For Feasts of Love I have been call'd unto,
Till now did ne'er invite, nor never vow;
All my Offences, that abroad you see,
Are Errors of the Blood, none of the Mind;
Love made them not, with Aëture they may be:
Where neither Party is not true nor kind:
They sought their Shame, that so their Shame did find.
And so much less of Shame in me remains,
By how much of me their Reproach contains.
Among the many that mine Eyes have seen,
Not one whose Flame my Heart so much as warmed,
Or my Affection put to the smallet Teen,
Or any of my Leisures ever charmed:
Harm have I done to them, but ne'er was harmed;
Kept Hearts in Liveries, but mine own was free,
And reign'd commanding in his Monarchy.
Look here what Tributes wounded Fancy sent me,
Of pallid Pearls and Rubies red as Blood;
Figuring, that they their Passions likewise sent me,
Of Grief and Blushes aptly understood;
In bloodless White, and the en crimson'd Mood,
Effects of Terror, and dear Modesty,
Encamp'd in Hearts, but fighting outwardly.
And lo! behold these Talents of their Hair,
With twisted Metal amorously emplace'd,
I have receiv'd from many a several Fair;
Their kind Acceptance weepingly beseech'd,
With th' Annexions of fair Gems enrich'd;
And deep-brain'd Sonnets, that did amplify
Each Stone's dear Nature, Worth and Quality:
The Diamond! why 'twas beautiful and hard,
Where to his invis'd Properties did tend:
The deep green Emerald, in whose fresh Regard
Weak Sights their sickly Radiance do amend:
The Heaven-hued Saphyr, and the Ophal blend

M 3

With
246 Poems on several Occasions.

With Objects manifold; each several Stone,
With Wit well blazon’d, smil’d, or made some Moan.
Lo! all these Trophies of Affections hot,
Of pensivy’d and subjut’d Desires, the Tender;
Nature hath charg’d me, that I hoard them not,
But yield them up, where I my self must render;
That is, to you my Origin and Ender.
For these of force must your Oblations be
Since I their Altar, you enpatron me.
O! then advance (of yours) that phraseless Hand,
Whose White weighs down the airy Scale of Praise!
Take all these Similes unto your own command,
Hallow’d with Sighs, that burning Lungs did raise;
What me your Minister for you obeys,
Works under you, and to your Audit comes
Their diffraction Parcels, incombined Sums.
Lo! this Device was sent me from a Nun,
Or Sister sanctify’d, of holiest Note,
Which late her noble Suit in Court did shun;
Whose rarest Havings made the Blossoms dote,
For she was sought by Spirits of richest Coat,
But kept cold Distance, and did thence remove,
To spend her Living in eternal Love.
But O! my Sweet, what Labour is’t to leave
The thing we have not, maistring what not strives?
Playing the Place which did no Form receive;
Playing patient Sports in unconstrained Gives!
She that her Fame so to her self contrives,
The Scars of Battle scapeth, by the Flight,
And makes her Absence valiant, not her Might.
O! pardon me, in that my Boast is true;
The Accident which brought me to her Eye,
Upon the Moment did her Force subdue,
And now she would the caged Cloister fly;
Religious Love put out Religious Eye:
Not to be tempted, would she be immur’d;
And now to tempt, all Liberty procur’d.
How mighty then you are, O hear me tell!
The broken Bosoms that to me belong,
Have empty’d all their Fountains in my Well;

And
Poems on several Occasions. 247

And mine I pour your Ocean all among,
I strong o'er them, and you o'er me being strong,
Must for your Victory us all congeal,
As compound Love to phisick your cold Breast,
My parts had power to charm a sacred Sun;
Tho disciplin'd, I dieted in Grace,
Believ'd her Eyes, when they t' affail begun,
All Vows and Consecrations giving place.
O! most potential Love! Vow, Bond, nor Space,
In thee hath neither String, Knot, nor Confine,
For thou art all, and all things else are thine.
When thou impressest, what are Precepts worth,
Of stale Example? When thou wilt enflame,
How coldly those Impediments stand forth
Of Wealth, of filial Fear, Law, Kindred, Fame?
Love's Arms are Peace, 'gainst Rule, 'gainst Sense, 'gainst
Shame,
And Sweetness in the suffering Pang it bears,
The Aloes of all Forces, Shocks and Fears.
Now all these Hearts, that do on mine depend,
Feeling it break, with bleeding Groans they pine,
And supplicant, their Sighs to you extend,
To leave the Battery that you make 'gainst mine,
Lending soft Audience to my sweet Design;
And credent Soul to that strong bonded Oath,
That shall prefer and undertake my Troth.
This said, his watry Eyes he did dismount,
Whose Sights till then were level'd on my Face,
Each Cheek a River running from a Fount,
With brinish Current downward flow'd apace.
Oh! how the Channel to the Stream gave Grace!
Who glaz'd with crystal Gate the glowing Roses,
That flame thro' Water which their Hue incloses.
Oh! Father! what a Hell of Witch-craft lies
In the small Orb of one particular Tear!
But with the Inundation of the Eyes
What rocky Heart to Water will not wear?
What Breast so cold, that is not warmed here?
Oh! cleft Effect! cold Modesty, hot Wrath!
Both Fire from hence, and Chill Extintiture hath.
For lo! his Passion but an Art of Craft,
Even there resolv'd my Reason into Tears;
There my white Stole of Chastity I daft,
Shook off my sober Guards, and civil Fears,
Appeal to him, as he to me appears,
All melting, tho our Drops this Difference bore,
His poison'd me and mine did him restore.
In him a plentitude of subtil Matter,
Apply'd to Caution, all Strange Forms receives
Of burning blushes, or of weeping Water,
Or swooning Paleness; and he takes and leaves,
In either's Aptness, as it best deceives:
To blush at Speeches rank, to weep at Woes,
Or to turn white, and swoon at tragick Shows:
That not a Heart, which in his level came
Could 'scape the Hail of his all-hurting Aim,
Shewing fair nature is both wild and tame:
And veil'd in them, did win whom he would maim;
Against the thing he sought, he would exclaim;
When he most burnt in heart-wifh'd Luxury,
He preach'd pure Maid, and prais'd cold Chastity.
Thus merely with the Garment of a Grace,
The naked and concealed Fiend he cover'd;
That th' Unexperienc'd gave the tempter place,
Which like a Cherubim above them hover'd:
Who, young and simple, would not be so lover'd?
Ah me! I fell: and yet do Question make,
What I should do again for such a fake.
Oh! that infected Moisture of his Eye!
Oh! that false Fire which in his Cheek so glow'd!
Oh! that forc'd Thunder from his Heart did fly!
Oh! that sad Breath his spongy Lungs bestow'd!
Oh! all that borrow'd Motion, seeming ow'd!
Would yet again betray the fore-betray'd,
And new pervert a reconciled Maid.
The Amorous Epistle of Paris to Helen.

HEALTH unto Leda's Daughter, Priam's Son Sends in these Lines, whose Health cannot be won But by your Gift, in whose power it may lie To make me whole or sick; to live or die. Shall I then speak? or doth my Flame appear Plain without Index? Oh! 'tis that I fear! My Love without discovering Smile takes place, And more than I could wish, shines in my Face; When I could rather in my Thoughts desire To hide the Smoke, till Time display the Fire: Time, that can make the Fire of Love shine clear, Untroubled with the misty Smoke of Fear. But I dissemble it; for who, I pray, Can Fire conceal? that will it self betray, Yet if you look, I should affirm that plain In Words, which in my Countenance I maintain. I burn, I burn, my Faults I have confess'd, My Words bear witness how my Looks transgress'd. Oh! pardon me, that have confess'd my Error, Cast not upon my Lines a Look of Terror; But as your Beauty is beyond compare, Suit unto that your Looks (Oh! you most Fair!) That you my Letter have receiv'd by this, The Supposition glads me, and I wish, By Hope encourag'd, Hope that makes me strong, You will receive me in some sort ere long. I ask no more, than what the Queen of Beauty Hath promis'd me, for you are mine by Duty. By her I claim you, you for me were made, And she it was my Journey did persuade. Nor, Lady, think your Beauty vainly sought; I by divine Instinct was hither brought: And to this Enterprize the Heavenly Powers Have given Consent, the Gods proclaim me yours. I aim at Wonders, for I covet You; Yet pardon me, I ask but what's my Due,

M 

Venus.
Poems on Several Occasions.

Venus her self my Journey hither led,
And gives you freely to my promis'd Bed.
Under her Conduct safe the Seas I past,
Till I arriv'd upon these Coasts at last:
Shipping my self from the Sygean Shore,
Whence unto these Confines my Course I bore.
She made the Surges gentle, the Winds fair;
Nor marvel whence these Calms proceeded are:
Need must the Power upon the salt Seas have,
That was Sea-born, created from a Wave.
Still may she stand in her Ability,
And as she made the Seas with much Facility,
To be thro'-fail'd, so may she calm my Heat,
And bear my Thoughts to their desired Seat,
My Flames I found not here; no, I protest,
I brought them with me closed in my Breast;
My self transported them without Attorney,
Love was the Motive to my tedious Journey.
Not blustering Winter, when he triumph'd most,
Nor any Error drove me to this Coast:
Not led by Fortune where the rough Winds please,
Nor Merchant-like, for gain crost'd I the Seas.
Fulness of Wealth in all my Fleet I see,
I'm rich in all things, save in wanting thee.
No Spoil of petty Nations my Ship seeks,
Nor land I as a Spy among the Greeks.
What need we? See, of all things we have store!
Compar'd with Troy, alas! your Greece is poor.
For thee I come, thy Fame hath thus far driven me,
Whom golden Venus hath by promise given me.
I wish'd thee ere I knew thee, long ago,
Before these Eyes dwelt on this glorious Show:
I saw thee in my Thoughts; know, beauteous Dame,
I first beheld you with the Eyes of Fame.
Nor marvel, Lady, I was stroke so far.
Thus Darts or Arrows sent from Bows of War,
Wound a great distance off: so was I hit
With a deep smarting Wound, that rankles yet.
For so it pleas'd the Fates, whom left you blame,
I'll tell a true Tale, to confirm the same.

When
When in my Mother's Womb full ripe I lay,
Ready the first Hour to behold the Day,
And the at point to be deliver'd straight,
And to unwise her of her Royal Freights,
My Birth-hour was delay'd, and that sad Night
A fearful Vision did the Queen affright.
In a Son's stead, to please the aged Sire,
She dreamt she had brought forth a Brand of Fire.
Frighted, she rises, and to Priam goes;
To the old King this ominous dream she shows;
He to the Priest: the Priest doth this return,
That the Child born shall stately Ilium burn.
Better than he was 'ware, the Prophet ghefs'd,
For lo! a kindled Brand flames in my Breast.
To prevent Fate, a Peasant I was held,
Till my fair Shape all other Swains excel'd;
And gave the doubtful World Assurance good,
Your Paris was deriv'd from Royal Blood.

Amid the Ibean Fields, there is a place
Remote, full of high Trees, which hide the Face
Of the green mantled Earth, where in thick Rows,
The Oak, the Elm, the Pine, the Pitch-Tree grows,
Here never yet did browse the wanton Ewe,
Nor from his Plot the slow Ox lick the Dew.
The savage Goat, that feeds among the Rocks,
Hath not graz'd here, nor any of their Flocks.
Hence the Dardanian Walls I might esp'y,
The lofty Towers of Ilium reared high.
Hence I the Seas might from the firm Land see,
Which to behold, I lean'd me on a Tree.
Believe me, for I speak but what is true,
Down from the sky, with feather'd Pinions, flew
The Nephew to great Atlas, and doth stand,
With golden Caduceus in his hand.
This, as the Gods to me thought good to show,
I hold it good, that you the same should know.
Three Goddesses behind young Hermes move;
Great Juno, Pallas, and the Queen of Love;
Who as in Pomp and Pride of Gaite they pass,
Scarce with their Weight they bend the Tops of Grass.

Amaz'd
252 Poems on several Occasions.

Amaz'd I start, and endlong stands my Hair,
When Maia's Son thus says; Abandon Fear,
Thou courteous Swain, that to these Groves repairest,
And freely judge, which of these three is fairest.
And left I should this curious Sentence shun,
He tells me by Jove's Sentence all is done.
And to be Judge, I no way can eschew.
This having said, up thro' the Air he flew.
I strait took heart-a-grace, and grew more bold;
And there their Beauties one by one beheld.
Why am I made the Judge to give this Doom?
Methinks all three are worthy to o'er-come.
To injure two such Beauties, what Tongue dare?
Or prefer one, where they be all so fair?
Now this seems fairest, now again that other;
Now would I speak, and now my Thoughts I smother:
And yet at length the Praise of one most founded,
And from that one my present Love is grounded.
The Goddesses out of their earnest Care,
And Pride of Beauty to be held most Fair,
Seek, with large Alms, and Gifts of wondrous Price,
To their own Thoughts my Censure to entice.
Juno the Wife of Jove doth first inchant me;
To judge her Fairest, she a Crown will grant me.
Pallas her Daughter, next doth undertake me;
Give her the Prize, and valiant she will make me.
I strait devise which can most Pleasure bring,
To be a valiant Soldier, or a King.
Last Venus smiling, came with such a Grace,
As if she sway'd an Empire in her Face:
Let not (said she) these Gifts the Conquest bear,
Combats and Kingdoms are both fraught with Fear.
I'll give thee what thou lovest best (lovely Swain)
The fairest Saint that doth on earth remain,
Shall be thine own; make thou the Conquest mine,
Fair Lada's fairest Daughter shall be thine,
This said, when with my self I had devised,
And her rich Gift and Beauty jointly prized;
Venus the Victor o'er the rest is plac'd,
Juno and Pallas leave the Mount disgrac'd.
Poems on several Occasions. 253

Mean time my Fate a prosperous Course had run,
And by known Signs King Priam call'd me Son.
The Day of my restoring is kept holy
Among the Saints-Days, consecrated solely
To my Remembrance, being a Day of Joy
For ever in the Calendars of Troy.

As I wish you, I have been wish'd by others;
The fairest Maids by me would have been Mothers:
Of all my Favours, I bestow'd not any,
You only may enjoy the Loves of many.
Nor by the Daughters of great Dukes and Kings.
Have I alone been fought, whose Marriage-Rings
I have turn'd back; but by a Strain more high,
By Nymphs and Fairies, such as never die.
No sooner were you promis'd as my Due,
But I all hated, to remember you:
Waking, I saw your Image; if I dreamt,
Your beauteous Figure still appear'd to tempt,
And urge this Voyage; till your Face excelling,
These Eyes beheld my Dreams were all of Helen.
Image how your Face should now incite me,
Being seen, that unseen did so much delight me.
If I was scorch'd so far off from the Fire,
How am I burnt to Cinders thus much nigher!
Nor could I longer owe my self this Treasure,
But thro' the Ocean I must search my Pleasure.
The Phrygian Hatchets to the Roots are put
Of the Ibean Pines, asunder cut,
The wood land Mountain yielded me large Fees,
Being despoil'd of all her tallest Trees.
From whence we have Squar'd out unnumber'd Beams,
That must be wash'd within the marine Streams.
The grounded Oaks are bow'd, tho' stiff as Steel,
And to the tough Ribs is the bending Keel
Woven by Shipwrights Craft; then the Main Mast,
Across whose Middle is the Sail-Yard plac'd,
Tackles and Sails, and next you may discern.
Our painted Gods upon the hooked Stern:
The God that bears me on my happy way,
And is my Guide, is Cupid. Now the Day
254 Poems on several Occasions.

In which the last Stroke of the Hammer's heard
Within our Navy, in the East appear'd:
And I must now launch forth (to the Fates please)
To seek Adventures in the Aegean Seas.
My Father and my Mother move Delay,
And by Intreaties would enforce my Stay:
They hang about my Neck, and with their Tears
Woo me, defer my Journey; but their Fears
Can have no power to keep me from thy sight:
And now Cassandra, full of sad Affright,
With loose dishevel'd Trammels, madly skips,
Just in the way betwixt me and my Ships:
Oh! whither wilt thou headlong run, she cries?
Thou bearest Fire with thee, whose Smoke up-flies
Unto the Heavens (O Jove!) thou little bearest
What quenchless Flames thou thro' the Water bearest.
Cassandra was too true a Prophetess;
Her quenchless Flame the Spake of (I confess)
My hot Desires burn in my Breast so fast,
That no red Furnace hotter Flames can cast.

I pass the City-Gates, my Bark I board,
The favorable Winds calm Gales afford,
And fill my Sails; unto your Land I steer,
For whither else his Course should Paris bear?
Your Husband entertains me as his Guest,
And all this hap'neth by the Gods Beheld.
He shows me all his Pastures, Parks, and Fields,
And every rare thing Lacedaemon yields.
He holds himself much pleased with my Being,
And nothing hides that he esteems worth seeing.
I am on fire, till I behold your Face,
Of all Achaea's Kingdom the sole Grace.
All other curious Objects I defy,
Nothing but Helen can content mine Eye:
Whom when I saw, I flood transform'd with Wonder,
Senseless, as one struck dead by Jove's sharp Thunder.
As I revive, my Eyes I roll and turn,
Whilst my flam'd Thoughts with hotter Fancies burn:
Even so, as I remember, look'd Love's Queen,
When she was last in Phrygian Ida seen;

Unto
Poems on several Occasions. 255

Unto which place by Fortune I was train'd,
Where, by my Censure, she the Conquest gain'd.
But had you made a fourth in that Contention,
Of Venus' Beauty there had been no mention:
Helen assuredly had borne from all
The Prize of Beauty, the bright golden Ball.

Only of you may this your Kingdom boast,
By you it is renown'd in every Coast:
Rumor hath every where your Beauty blaz'd:
In what remote Clime is not Helen prais'd?
From the bright Eastern Sun's Up-rise, inquire,
Even to his Down-fall, where he flakes his Fire;
There lives not any of your Sex that dare
Contend with you, that are proclaim'd so fair.
Trust me; for Truth I speak: Nay, what's most true.
Too sparingly the World hath spoke of you.
Fame that hath undertook your Name to blaze,
Play'd but the envious Housewife in your Praise.
More than Report could promise, or Fame blazon,
Are these Divine Perfections that I gaze on:
These were the fame that made Duke Theseus lavish,
Who in thy Prime and Nonage did thee ravish:
And worthy Rape for such a worthy Man!
Thrice happy Rapisher! to seize thee then,
When thou wert stript stark naked to the skin;
A Sight of force to make the Gods to sin.
Such is your Country's Guise, at Seasons when
With naked Ladies they mix'd naked Mirth.
That he did steal thee from thy Friends, I praise him;
And for that Deed, I to the Heavens will raise him.
That he return'd thee back, by Jove I wonder;
Had I been Theseus, he that should assunder
Have parted us, or snatch'd thee from my Bed,
First from my Shoulders should have part'd my Head:
So rich a Purchase, such a glorious Prey,
Should constantly have been detain'd for aye.
Could these my strong Arms possibly unclasp,
Whilst in their amorous Folds they Helen grasp?
Neither by forc'd Constraint, nor by free Giving,
Could you depart that Compass, and I living.

But
256 Poems on several Occasions.

But if by rough Inforce I must restore you,
Some Fruits of Love (which I so long have bore you)
I first would reap, and some sweet Favour gain,
That all my Suit were not bestow'd in vain.
Either with me you shall abide and stay,
Or for your Pafs your Maidenhead should pay:
Or say, I spar'd you that, yet would I try
What other Favour I could else come by;
All that belongs to Love I would not miss,
You should not lett me both to clip and kiss.

Give me your Heart, fair Queen, my Heart you owe,
And what my Resolution is, you know.
Till the last Fire, my breathless Body take,
The Fire within my Breast can never flake.
Before large Kingdoms I prefer'd your Face,
And Juno's Love, and potent Gifts disgrace;
To fold you in my amorous Arms I chus'd,
And Pallas' Virtues scornfully refus'd:
When they, with Venus, on the Hill of Ida,
Made me the Judge their Beauties to decide.
Nor do I yet repent me, having took
Beauty, and Strength, and Scepter'd Rule forsook:
Methinks I chus'd the best (nor think it strange)
I still persist, and never mean to change.
Only that my Imployment be not vain,
(Oh! you more worth than any Empire's Gain!) Let me intreat: left you my Birth should scorn,
Or Parentage, Know, I am Royal born:
By marrying me, you shall not wrong your State,
Nor be a Wife to one degenerate.
Search the Records where we did first begin,
And you shall find the Pleiads of our kin;
Nay, Jove himself, all others to forbear
That in our Stock renowned Princes were.
My Father of all Asia reigns sole King,
Whose boundless Coast scarce any feather'd Wing
Can give a Girdle to; a happier Land,
A Neighbour to the Ocean, cannot stand.
There in a narrow compass you may see
Cities and Towers, more than may number be;
Poems on several Occasions. 257

The House gilt, rich Temples that excel,
And you will say, I near the great Gods dwell.
You shall behold high Ilium’s lofty Towers,
And Troy’s brave Walls, built by no mortal Powers;
But made by Phoebus, the great God of Fire,
And by the Touch of his melodious Lyre.
Ask if we have People to inhabit, when
The sad Earth groans, to bear such Troops of Men;
Judge, Helen, likewise when you come to land,
The Asian Women shall admiring stand,
Saluting thee with Welcome, more and less,
In pressing Throngs, and Numbers numberless.
More, that our Courts can hold of you (most fair)
You to your self will say, Alas! how bare
And poor Achaia is! when, with great pleasure,
You see each House contain a City’s Treasure.

Mistake me not, I Sparta do not scorn,
I hold the Land blest where my Love was born:
Tho barren else, rich Sparta Helen bore,
And therefore I that Province must adore.
Yet is your Land, methinks, but lean and empty,
You worthy of a Clime that flows with Plenty:
Full Troy I prostrate, it is yours by Duty;
This petty Seat becomes not your rich Beauty.
Attendance, Preparation, Curt’fy, State,
Fit such a Heavenly Form; on which should wait
Cost, fresh Variety, delicious Diet,
Pleasure, Contentiment, and luxurious Riot.
What Ornaments we use, what Fashions feign,
You may perceive by me and my proud Train.
Thus we attire our Men; but with more Cost
Of Gold and Pearl, the rich Gowns are imboft
Of our chief Ladies; gheds by what you see,
You may be soon induc’d to credit me.

Be tractable, fair Spartan, nor contemn
A Trojan born, deriv’d from Royal Stem:
He was a Trojan, and ally’d to Hector,
That waits upon Jove’s Cup, and fills him Nectar.
A Trojan did the Fair Aurora wed,
And nightly slept within her Roseat Bed.
The Goddess that ends Night, and enters Day,
From our fair Trojan Coast stole him away.
Anchises was a Trojan, whom Love's Queen
(Making the Trees of Ida a thick Skreen
'Twixt Heaven and her) oft lay with. View me well,
I am a Trojan too, in Troy I dwell.
Thy Husband Menelaus hither bring,
Compare our Shapes, our Years, and every thing:
I make you Judges, wrong me if you can;
You needs must say, I am the proper Man.
None of my Line hath turn'd the Sun to Blood,
And robb'd his Steeds of their ambrosial Food.
My Father grew not from the Cauca's Rock,
Nor shall I graft you in a bloody Stock.
Priam ne'er wrong'd the guiltless Soul, or further,
Made the Myrtean Sea look red with Murder:
Nor thirsteth my great Grandfire in the Lake
Of Lethe, chin-deep, yet no Thirst can flake:
Nor after ripen'd Apples vainly skips,
Who fly him still, and yet still touch his Lips...
But what of this? If you be so deriv'd,
You, notwithstanding, are no Right depriv'd:
You grace your Stock, and being so Divine,
Love is of force compell'd into your Line.

Oh Mischief! whilst I vainly speak of this,
Your Husband all unworthy of such Blis,
Enjoys you this long Night, enfolds your Wait, And where he lifts, may boldly touch and taste.
So when you sat at Table, many a Toy
Passeth between you, my vex'd Soul t' annoy.
At such high Feasts I with my Enemy fit,
Where Discontent attends on every Bit.
I never yet was plac'd at any Feast,
But oft it irk'd me that I was your Guest.
That which offends me most, thy rude Lord knows;
For still his Arms about thy Neck he throws.
Which I no sooner spy, but I grow mad,
And hate the Man whose courting makes me sad.
Poems on Several Occasions.

Shall I be plain? I am ready to sink down,
When I behold him wrap you in his Gown;
When you sit smiling on his amorous Knee.
His Fingers press where my Hands itch to be.
But when he hugs you, I am forc'd to frown;
The Meat I'm eating will by no means down,
But sticks half way: amidst these Discontents,
I have observ'd you laugh at my Laments,
And with a scornful, yet a wanton Smile,
Deride my Sighs and Groans. Oft to beguile
My Passions, and to quench my fiery Rage,
By quaffing Healths I've thought my Flame 't assuage;
But Bacchus' full Cups make my Flames burn higher,
Add Wine to Love, and you add Fire to Fire.
To shun the Sight of many a wanton Fear,
Bewith your Lord and you, I shift my Seat,
And turn my Head; but thinking of your Grace,
Love skews my Head to gaze back on your Face.
What were I best to do? To see you play,
Mads me, and I perforce must turn away;
And to forbear the Place where you abide,
Would kill me dead, should I but start aside.
As much as lies in me, I strive to bury
The Shape of Love, and in Mirth's spite seem merry.
But oh! the more I seek it to suppress,
The more my blabbing Looks my Love profess.

You know my Love which I in vain should hide;
Would God it did appear to none beside!
Oh Love! how often have I turn'd my Cheek,
To hide th' apparent Tears, that Passage seek
From forth my Eyes, and to a Corner stept,
Left any Man should ask wherefore I wept.
How often have I told you piteous Tales,
Of constant Lovers, and how Love prevails?
When such great Heed to my Discourse I took,
That every Accent suited to your Look.
In forged Names my self I represent:
The Lover so perplex'd, and so tormented,
If you will know, behold I am the same;
Paris was meant in that true Lover's Name.
260 Poems on several Occasions.

As often, that I might the more securely,
Speak loose immodest Words, that found impurely,
That they offenceless might your sweet Ears touch,
I've lifted them up, like one had drunk too much.
Once I remember, your loose Veil betray'd
Your naked Skin, and a fair Passage made
To my enamour'd Eye: Oh! Skin much brighter
Than Snow, or purest Milk, in Colour whiter
Than your fair Mother Lada, when Jove grac'd her,
And in the Shape of feather'd Swan embrac'd her,
Whilst at this ravishing Sight I stood amaz'd;
And without Interruption freely gaz'd,
The wreathed Handle of the Bowl I grasp'd,
Fell from my Hold, my strengthless Hand unclasph'd.
A Goblet at that time I held by chance,
And down it fell, for I was in a Trance.
Kiss your fair Daughter, and to her I skip,
And snatch your Kisses from your sweet Child's Lip.
Sometimes I throw my self along, and lie,
Singing Love-Songs; and if you cast your Eye
On my effeminate Gesture, I still find
Some pretty cover'd Signs to speak my Mind;
And then my earnest Suit bluntly invades
Æthra and Climenæ, your two chief Maids.
But they return me Answers full of Fear,
And to my Motions lend no further Ear.
Oh! that you were the Prize of some great Strife,
And he that wins, might claim you for his Wife.
Hyppomenes with swift Atlanta ran,
And at one Course the Goal and Lady won;
Even she, by whom so many Suitors perish'd,
Was in the Bosom of her new Love cherish'd.
So Hercules for Dejaneira strove,
Break Achelous' Horn, and gain'd his Love.
Had I such Liberty, such Freedom granted,
My Resolution never could be daunted.
Your self should find, and all the World should see,
Helen a Prize alone reserv'd for me.
There is not left me any Means (most fair)
To court you now, but by Intreats and Prayer;

Unless
Unless (as it becomes me) you think meet,
That I should prostrate fall, and kiss your Feet.
Oh! all the Honour, that our last Age wins,
Thou Glory of the two Tindarian Twins!
Worthy to be Jove's Wife, in Heaven to reign,
Were you not Jove's own Daughter, of his Strain.
To the Sygean Confines I will carry thee,
And in the Temple of great Pallas marry thee;
Or in this Island where I vent my Moans,
I'll beg a Tomb for my exiled Bones.
My Wound is not a slight Raze with an Arrow,
But it hath pierc'd my Heart, and burnt my Marrow.
This Prophecy my Sister oft hath founded,
That by an heavenly Dart I should be wounded.
Oh! then forbear (fair Helen!) to oppose you
Against the Gods, they say I shall not lose you.
Yield you to their Behest, and you shall find
The Gods to your Petitions likewise kind.
A thousand things at once are in my Brain,
Which that I may essentially complain,
And not in Papers empty all my Head,
Anon at Night receive me to your Bed.
Blush you at this? or Lady do you fear
To violate the nuptial Laws austerer?
Oh! simple Helen! foolish I might say,
What Profit reap you to be chaste I pray?
Is't possible, that you a World to win,
Should keep that Face, that Beauty without Sin?
Rather you must your glorious Face exchange
For one (less fair) or else not seem so strange.
Beauty and Chastity at variance are,
'Tis hard to find one Woman chaste and fair.
Venus will not have Beauty over-aw'd,
High Jove himself stolen Pleasures will applaud;
And by such thievish Passages we may gather
How Jove 'gainst Wedlock's Laws became your Father.
He and your Mother Leda both transgress'd,
When you were got she bare a tender Breast.
What Glory can you gain Love-Sweets to another?
Or to be counted chaster than your Mother?

Profess
Profes strict Chastity, when with great Joy,
I lead you as my Bride-espous'd thro' Troy.
Then I intreat you rein your Pleasures in,
I wish thy Paris may be all thy Sin.
If Eithera her firm Covenant keep,
Tho' I within your Bosom nightly sleep,
We shall not much misdo, but to offend,
That we by Marriage may our Guilt amend.

Your Husband hath himself this Business aided,
And tho' (not with his Tongue) he hath persuaded,
By all his Deeds (as much) left he should stay
Our private Meetings, he is far away,
Of purpose rid unto the farthest West,
That he might leave his Wife unto his Guest.
No fitter time he could have found to visit
The Christean Royal Scepter, and to seize it.
Oh! simple, simple Husband! but he's gone,
And going, left you this to think upon.
Fair Wife (quoth he) I prethee in my Place
Regard the Trojan Prince, and do him Grace.
Behold, a Witness I against you stand,
You have been careless of this kind Command.
Count from his first day's Journey, never since
Did you regard or grace the Trojan Prince.
What think you of your Husband? that he knows
The Worth and Value of the Face he owes?
Who (but a Fool) such Beauty would endanger?
Or trust it to the Mercy of a Stranger?
Then (Royal Queen!) if neither may intreat,
My quenchless Passion, nor Love's raging Heat
Can win you; we are woo'd both to this Crime,
Even by the fit Advantage of the Time;
Either to love sweet Sport we must agree,
Or shew our selves to be worse Fools than he.
He took you by the Hand the hour he rode,
And knowing I with you must make abode,
Brings you to me; what should I further say?
It was his Mind to give you quite away.

What
Poems on several Occasions. 263

What meant he else? then let's be blithe and jolly,
And make the best use of your Husband's Folly.
What should we do? your Husband is far gone,
And this cold Night (poor Soul) you lie alone.
I want a Bedfellow, so do we either,
What lets us then, but that we lie together?
You slumber think on me, on you I dream,
Both our Desires are fervent and extreme.
Sweet, then appoint the Night, why do you stay?
O Night! more clearer than the brightest Day.
Then I dare freely speak, protest, and swear,
And of my Vows the Gods shall Record bear.
Then will I seal the Contract and the Strife,
From that Day forward we are Man and Wife:
Then questionless I shall so far persuade,
That you with me shall Troy's rich Coast invade,
And with your Phrygian Guest at last agree,
Our potent Kingdom, and rich Crown to see.
But if you (blushing) fear the vulgar Bruit,
That says you follow me, to me make Suit,
Fear it not Helen; I'll so work with Fame,
I will (alone) be guilty of all Blame.

Duke Theseus was my Instance, and so were
Your Brothers, Lady; can I come more near,
To ensample my Attempts by? Theseus hal'd
Helen perforce; your Brothers they prevail'd
With the Leucippian Sisters; now from these,
I'll count my self the fourth (if Helen please.)
Our Trojan Navy rides upon the Coast,
Rigg'd, arm'd, and mann'd, and I can proudly boast,
The Banks are high, why do you longer stay?
The Winds and Oars are ready to make way.
You shall be like a high Majestick Queen,
Led thro' the Dardan City, and be seen
By Millions, who your State having commended,
Will (wondering) swear, some Goddess is descended.
Where'er you walk the Priests shall Incense burn,
No way you shall your Eye or Body turn,
But sacrific'd Beasts the Ground shall beat,
And bright religious Fires the Welkin heat.

My
Poems on several Occasions.

My Father, Mother, Brother, Sisters, all
Illust and Troy in Pomp Majestical,
Shall with rich Gifts present you (but alas!)
Not the least part (so far they do surpass)
Can my Epistle speak; you may behold
More than my Words or Writings can unfold.

Nor fear the Brunt of War, or threatening Steel,
When we are fled, to dog us at the heel;
Or that all Gracia will their Powers unite:
Of many ravish'd, can you one recite
Whom War repurchas'd? these be idle Fears,
Rough blustering Boreas fair Oritha bears
Unto the Land of Thrace, yet Thrace still free,
And Athens rais'd no rude Hoffility.
In winged Pegasus did Jason sail;
And from great Cholcos he Medea stole:
Yet Thessaly you see can shew no Scar
Of former Wounds in the Thessalian War.
He that first ravish'd you, in such a Fleet
As ours is, Ariadne brought from Crete.
Yet Minos and Duke Theseus were agreed,
About that Quarrel not a Breast did bleed.
Less is the Danger (trust me) than the Fear,
That in these vain and idle Doubts appear.
But say, rude War should be proclaim'd at length,
Know I am valiant, and have sinewy Strength.
The Weapons, that I use, are apt to kill.
Asia besides more spacious Fields can fill
With armed Men, than Greece. Amongst us are
More perfect Soldiers, more Beasts apt for War.
Nor can thy Husband Menelaus be
Of any high Spirit and Magnanimity;
Or so well prov'd in Arms: for Helen I,
Being but a Lad, have made my Enemies fly;
Regain'd the Prey from out the Hands of Thieves,
Who had despooil'd our Herds, and stol'n our Beeses.
By such Adventures I my Name obtain'd,
(Being but a Lad) the Conquest I have gain'd
Of young Men in their Prime, who much could do;
Deiphobus, Ilioneus too.
I have o'ercome in many sharp Contentions;
Nor think these are my vain and forg'd Inventions;
Or that I only hand to hand can fight,
My Arrows when I please shall touch the White;
I am expert i'th' Quarry and the Bow,
You cannot boast your heartless Husband so.
Had you the Power in all things to supply me,
And should you nothing in the World deny me;
To give me such a Hector to my Brother,
You could not, the Earth bears not such another.
By him alone all Asia is well mann'd;
He like an Enemy against Greece shall stand,
Oppos'd to your belit Fortunes, wherefore strive you?
You do not know his Valour that must hive you,
Or what hid Worth is in me; but at length
You will confess when you have prov'd my Strength.
Thus either War shall still our Steps pursue,
Or Greece shall fall in Troy's all conquering View.
Nor would I fear for such a royal Wife,
To set the universal World at strife.
To gain rich Prizes, Men will venture far,
The Hope of Purchase makes us bold in War.
If all the World about you should contend,
Your Name should be eterniz'd without end;
Only be bold; and fearless may we fail
Into my Country, with a prosperous Gale!
If the Gods grant me my expected Day,
It to the full shall all these Covenants pay.

Helen to Paris.

No sooner came mine Eye unto the sight
Of thy rude Lines, but I must needs re-write.
Dar'st thou (O shameless) in such heinous wife,
The Laws of Hospitality despise?
And being a Stranger, from thy Country's reach,
 solicit a chaste Wife to Wedlock's Breach?

Vol. X. N

Was
Poems on several Occasions.

Was it for this our free Tanarian Port
Receiv’d thee and thy Train, in friendly fort?
And when great Neptune nothing could appease,
Gave thee safe Harbour from the stormy Seas?
Was it for this, our Kingdom’s Arms spread wide
To entertain thee from the Water-side?
Yet thou of foreign Soil remote from hence,
A Stranger, coming we scarce knew from whence.
Is perjur’d Wrong the Recompence of Right?
Is all our Friendship guerdon’d with Despight?
I doubt me then, whether in our Court doth tarry
A friendly Guest, or a fierce Adversary.
Nor blame me, for if justly you consider,
And these Presumptions well compare together,
So simple my Complaint will not appear,
But you your self must needs excuse my Fear.
Well, hold me simple, much it matters not,
Whilst I preserve my chaste Name far from Spot;
For when I seem touch’d with a bafhul Shame,
It shews how highly I regard my Fame.
When I seem sad, my Countenance is not feigned;
And when I lour, my Look is unconstrained.
But say my Brow be cloudy, my Name’s clear,
And reverently you shall of Helen hear.
No Man from me adulterate Spoils can win;
For to this Hour I have sported without Sin:
Which makes me in my Heart the more to wonder,
What Hope you have in time to bring me under:
Or from mine Eye what Comfort thou canst gather,
To pity thee, and not despise thee rather.
Because once Theseus hurry’d me from hence,
And did to me a kind of Violence;
Follows it therefore, I am of such Price,
That ravish’d once, I should be ravish’d twice?
Was it my Fault, because I striv’d in vain,
And wanted Strength his Fury to restrain?
He flatter’d, and spake fair, I struggled still;
And what he got, was much against my Will.
Of all his Toil, he reap’d no wished Fruit,
For with my Wrangling I withstood his Suit.
At length I was restor'd, untouch'd, and clear;
In all my Rape, I suffer'd nought save Fear:
A few untoward Kisses he (God wot)
Of further Favours he could never boast;
Dry, without Relish, by much striving got,
And them with much ado, and to his Cost.
I doubt your Purpose aims at greater Blissers,
And hardly would alone be pleas'd with Kisses.
Thou haft some further Aim, and seek'st to do
What, Jove defend, I should consent unto.
He bore not thy bad Mind, but did restore me
Unblemish'd to the Place from whence he bore me.
The Youth was bashful, and thy Boldness lack'd,
And 'tis well known, repent'd his bold Fact.
Theffers repent'd, so should Paris do,
Succeed in Love and in Repentance too.
Nor am I angry; who can angry be
With him that loves her? If your Heart agree
With your kind Words, your Suit I could applaud,
So I were sure your Lines were void of Fraud.
I cast not these strange Doubts, or this Dispense,
Like one that were bereft all Confidence;
Nor that I with my self am in Disgrace,
Or do not know the Beauty of my Face:
But because too much Trust hath damag'd such
As have believ'd Men in their Loves too much.
And now the general Tongue of Women faith,
Mens Words are full of Treason, void of Faith.

Let others sin, and Hours of Pleasures waste,
'Tis rare to find the sober Matron chaste.
Why? say it be that Sin prevails with fair ones,
May not my Name be rank'd among the rare ones?
Because my Mother Leda was beguil'd,
Must I stray too, that am her eldest Child?
I must confess my Mother made a Rape,
But Jove beguil'd her in a borrow'd Shape:
When she (poor Soul) not dreamt of God nor Man,
He trod her like a milk-white feather'd Swan.
She was deceiv'd by Error, if I yield
To your unjust Request, nothing can shield

Me
268 Poems on several Occasions.

Me from Reproach; I cannot plead concealing:
'Twas in Her, Error; 'tis in me, Plain-dealing.
She happily err'd; he that her Honour spilt,
Had in himself full Power to save the Guilt.
Her Error happy'd me too (I confess)
If to be Jove's Child, be a Happiness.

T' omit high Jove, of whom I stand in awe,
As the great Grand sire to our Father-in-Law;
To pass the Kin I claim from Tantalus,
From Pelops, and from noble Tindarus;
Leda by Jove, in shape of Swan, beguil'd,
Her self to chang'd, and by him made with Child,
Proves Jove my Father. Then you idly strive,
Your Name from Gods and Princes to derive.
What need you of old Priam make Relation,
Laomedon, or your great Phrygian Nation?
Say all be true; what then? He of whom most
To be of your Alliance, you to boast,
Jove (five Degrees at least) from you removed;
To be the first from me, is plainly proved.
And tho (as I believ'd well) Troy may stand
Powerful by Sea, and full of Strength by Land;
And no Dominion to your State superior,
I hold our Clime nothing to Troy inferior.
Say, you in Riches pass us, or in Number
Of People, whom you boast your Streets to cumber;
Yet yours a barbarous Nation is, I tell you,
And in that kind do we of Greece excel you.
Your rich Epistle doth such Gifts present,
As might the Goddesses themselves content,
And woo them to your Pleasure: but if I
Should pass the Bounds of Shame, and tread awry;
If ever you should put me to my Shifts,
Your self should move me more than all your Gifts.
Or if I ever shall transgress by stealth,
It shall be for your sake, not for your Wealth.
But as your Gifts I scorn not, so such seem
Most precious, where the Giver we esteem.
More than your Presents it shall Helen please,
That you for her have past the stormy Seas;

That
POEMS on several Occasions. 269

That she hath caus'd your Toil, that you respect her,
And more than all your Trojan Dames affect her.

But you're a Wag in troth, the Notes and Signs
You make at Table, in the Meats and Wines,
I have observ'd, when I least seem'd to mind them,
For at the first my curious Eye did find them.
Sometimes (you Wanton) your fix'd Eye advances
His Brightness against mine, darting sweet Glances,
Out-gazing me with such a steadfast Look,
That my daz'd Eyes their Splendor have forsook;
And then you sigh, and by and by you stretch
Your amorous Arm outright, the Bowl to reach,
That next me stands, making Excuse to sip
Just in the self-same Place that kids'd my Lip.
How oft have I observ'd your Finger make
Tricks and conceited Signs, which strait I take?
How often doth your Brow your smooth Thoughts cloke
When, to my seeming, it hath almost spoke?
And still I fear'd my Husband would have spy'd you;
In troth you are to blame, and I must chide you.

You are too manifest a Lover (ruh)
At such known Signs I could not chuse but blush.
And to my self I oft was forc'd to say,
This Man at nothing shames. Is this (I pray)
Ought save the Truth? Oft-times upon the Board
Where Helen was ingraven, you the Word
Amo have underwrit, in new-spilt Wine:
(Good sooth) at first I could not scan the Line,
Nor understand your Meaning. Now (Oh! spite)
My self am now taught so to read and write.
Should I offend, as Sin to me is strange,
These Blandishments have power chaste Thoughts to
Or if I could be mov'd to step astray,
These would provoke me to lascivious Play:
Besides, I must confess, you have a Face
So admirable rare, so full of Grace,
That it hath power to woo, and to make Seizure
Of the most bright chaste Beauties to your Pleasure.
Yet had I rather stainless keep my Fame,
Than to a Stranger hazard my good Name.

N 3

Make
270 Poems on several Occasions.

Make me your Instance, and forbear the Fair;  
Of that which most doth please you, make most spare.  
The greatest Virtues, of which wise Men boast,  
Is to abstain from that which pleaseth most.  
How many gallant Youths (think you) desire  
That which you covet, scorch'd with the self-same Fire?  
Are all the World Fools? only Paris wife?  
Or is there none, save you, have judging Eyes?  
No, no, you view no more than others see,  
But you are plainer and more bold with me.  
You are more earnest to pursue your Game;  
I yield you not more Knowledge, but less Shame.  
I would to God that you had fail'd from Troy,  
When my Virginity and Bed to enjoy,  
A thousand gallant Princely Suiters came:  
Had I beheld young Paris, I proclaim,  
Of all those thousand I had made you Chief,  
And Spartan Menelaus, to his Grief,  
Should to my Censure have subscrib'd and yielded.  
But now (alas!) your Hopes are weakly builded:  
You cover Goods possess'd, Pleasures foretafted;  
Tardy you come, that should before have hasted;  
What you desire, another claims as due:  
As I could wish t'have been espous'd to you,  
So let me tell you, since it is my Fate,  
I hold me happy in my present State.  
Then cease, fair Prince, an idle Suit to move,  
Seek not to harm her, whom you seem to love,  
In my contented State let me be guided,  
As both my States and Fortunes have provided;  
Nor in so vain a Quest your Spirits toil,  
To seek at my hands an unworthy Spoil.

But see how soon poor Women are deluded,  
Venus her self this Covenant hath concluded:  
For in the Ideal Vallies you espy  
Three Goddes's, stripp'd naked to your Eye;  
And when the first had promis'd you a Crown,  
The second Fortitude and War's Renown;  
The third bespake you thus: Crown, nor War's Pride  
Will I bequeath, but Helen to thy Bride.
I scarce believe, those high immortal Creatures
Would to your Eye expose their naked Features.
Or say the first Part of your Tale be pure,
And meet with Truth, the second's false I'm sure;
In which poor I was thought the greatest Meed,
In such a high Cause by the Gods decreed.
I have not of my Beauty such Opinion,
T' imagine it prefer'd before Dominion,
Or Fortitude; nor can your Words persuade me,
The greatest Gift of all the Goddess made me.
It is enough to me Men praise my Face,
But from the Gods I merit no such Grace:
Nor doth the Praise, you charge me with, offend me,
If Venus do not enviously commend me.
But, lo! I grant you, and imagine true
Your free Report, claiming your Praise as due;
Who would in pleasing Things call Fame a Lyar,
But give that Credit which we most desire?

That we have mov'd these Doubts, be not you griev'd,
The greatest Wonders are the least believ'd:
Know then, I first am pleas'd that Venus ought me
Such undeserved Grace; next that you thought me
The greatest Meed. Nor Scepter, nor War's Fame,
Did you prefer before poor Helen's Name.
(Hard Heart! 'tis time thou shouldst at last come down)
Therefore I am your Valour, I your Crown.
Your Kindness conquers me, do what I can;
I were hard-hearted not to love this Man.
Obdurate I was never, and yet coy
To favour him whom I can ne'er enjoy.
What profits it the barren Sands to plow,
And in the Furrows our Affections sow?
In the sweet Theft of Venus I am rude,
And know not how my Husband to delude.
Now I these Love-lines write, my Pen, I vow,
Is a new Office taught, not known till now.
Happy are they that in this Trade have Skill;
Alas! I am a Fool, and shall be still;
And having till this Hour not stept astray,
Fear in these Sports left I should miss my Way.

N 4  The
The Fear (no doubt) is greater than the Blame,
I stand confounded, and amaz'd with Shame;
And with the very Thought of what you seek,
Think every Eye fix'd on my guilty Cheek.
Nor are these Suppositions merely vain,
The murmuring People whisperingly complain;
And my Maid Æthra hath, by list'ning fleetly,
Brought me such News, as touch'd my Honour highly.
Wherefore (dear Lord) dissemble or desist;
Being over-ey'd, we cannot as we lift
Fashion our Sports, our Loves pure Harvest gather;
But why should you desist? Dissemble rather.
Sport, but in secret; sport where none may see:
The greater, but not greatest Liberty
Is limited to our lascivious Play,
That Menelaus is far hence away.
My Husband about great Affairs is posted,
Leaving his Royal Guest securely hosted;
His Business was important and material,
Being employ'd about a Crown Imperial.
And as he now is mounted on his Steed,
Ready on his long Journey to proceed:
Even as he questions to depart or stay,
Sweet-Heart (quoth I) Oh! be not long away:
With that he reach'd me a sweet parting Kiss,
(How loth he was to leave me, guess by this:) Farewel, fair Wife (fairest he) bend all thy Cares
To my domestic Business, Home-Affairs;
But as the thing that I affection best,
Sweet Wife, look well unto my Trojan Guest.
It was no sooner our, but with much Pain
My itching Spleen from Laughter I restrain;
Which striving to keep in, and bridle still,
At length I rung forth these few words (I will.)
He's on his Journey to the Isle of Crete,
But think not we may therefore safely meet:
He is so absent, that as present I
Am still within his reach, his Ear, his Eye;
And tho Abroad, his Power at Home commands,
For know you not Kings have long-reaching Hands?
The Fame for Beauty you besides have given me,
Into a great Exigent hath driven me.
The more your Commendation fill'd his Ear,
The more just Cause my Husband hath to fear;
Nor marvel you the King hath left me so,
Into remote and foreign Climes to go:
Much Confidence he dares repose in me,
My Carriage, Haviour, and my Modesty;
My Beauty he mistrusts, my Heart relies in;
My Face he fears, my chaste Life he affies in.

To take Time now when Time is, you persuade me,
And with his apt fit Absence you invade me:
I would but fear, nor is my Mind well set;
My Will would further what my Fear doth let.
I have no Husband here, and you no Wife;
I love your Shape, you mine, dear as your Life.
The Nights seem long to such as sleep alone,
Our Letters meet to interchange our Moan.
You judge me beauteous, I esteem you fair,
Under one Roof we Lovers lodged are.
And (let me die) but every thing consider,
Each thing persuades us we shall lie together.
Nothing we see molests us, nought we hear,
And yet my forward Will is slack thro' Fear.
I would to God, that what you ill persuade,
You could as well compel; so I were made
Unwilling willing, pleasingly abus'd,
So my Simplicity might be excus'd.
Injury's Force is oft-times wondrous pleasing,
To such as suffer Ease in their diseasing;
If what I will, you'gainst my Will shoud do,
I with such Force could be well pleased too.

But whilst our Love is young and in the Bud,
Suffer his Infant Vigour be withstood:
A Flame new kindled is as easily quench'd,
And sudden Sparks in little Drops are drench'd.
A Traveller's Love is, like himself, unstay'd,
And wanders where he walks; it is not laid

N 5
On any firmer Ground; for when we alone
Think him to us, the Wind blows fair, he's gone.
Witness Hypsipyle, alike betray'd;
Witness with her the bright Mynoyan Maid:
Nay then your self, as you your self have spoken,
To fair Eosone have your Promise broken.
Since I beheld your Face first, my Desire
Hath been, of Trojan Paris to enquire.
I know you now in every true Respect,
I'll grant you thus much then, say you affect
Me (whom you term your own,) I'll go thus far;
Do not the Phrygian Mariners prepare
Their Sails and Oars, ev'n now whilst we recite
Exchange of Words about the wished Night?
Say that even now you were prepar'd to climb
My long-wish'd Bed, just at th' appointed time
The Wind should alter, and blow fair for Troy,
You must break off, in midst of all your Joy,
And leave me in the Infancy of Pleasure;
Amid my Riches, I shall lose my Treasure.
You will forsake the Sweets my Bed affords,
T' exchange for Cabins, Hatches and pitch'd Boards.
Then what a fickle Courtship you commence,
When, with the first Wind, all your Love blows hence?
But shall I follow you when you are gone,
And be the Grandchild to Laomedon!
And Ilium see, whose Beauty you proclaim?
I do not so despise the Britt of Fame,
That she to whom I am indebted Thanks,
Should fill the Earth with such adulterate Pranks.
What will Achaia? What will Sparta say?
What will your Troy report, and Asia?
What my old Priam, or his reverend Queen?
What may your Sisters, having Helen seen,
Or your Dardanian Brothers deem of me?
Will they not blame my loose Incautlity?
Nay, how can you your self faithful deem me,
And not amongst the loosest Dames esteem me?
No Stranger shall your Asian Ports come near,
But he shall fill your guilty Soul with Fear.

How
Poems on several Occasions. 275

How often, angry at some small Offence,
Will you thus say; Adultress, get thee hence?
Forgetting you your self have been the Chief
In my Transgression, tho not in my Grief.
Consider what it is, forgetful Lover,
To be Sin's Author, and Sin's sharp Reprover.
But ere the least of all these Ills betide me,
I wish the Earth may in her Bosom hide me.

But I shall all your Phrygian Wealth possess,
And more than your Epistle can express:
Gifts, woven Gold, Embroidery, rich Attire,
Purple and Plate, or what I can desire.
Yet give me leave, think you all this extends
To counteract the Loss of my chief Friends?
Whose Friendship, or whose Aid shall I implo
To succour me, when I am wrong'd in Troy?
Or whether can I, having thus misdone,
Unto my Father, or my Brothers run?
As much as you to me, false Jason swore
Unto Medea, yet from Jason's Door
He after did exile her. Now, poor Heart,
Where is thy Father that should take thy Part?
Old Aietes or Calciope? thou took'st
No Aid from them, whom thou before forsook'st.
Or say thou didst (alas! they cannot hear
Thy sad Complaints) yet I no such thing fear;
No more Medea did: good Hopes ingage
Themselves so far, they fail in their Presage.
You see the Ships that in the Main are tost'd,
And many times by Tempests wreck'd and lost,
Had, at their lanching from the Haven's Mouth,
A smooth Sea, and a calm Gale from the South.
Besides, the Brand your Mother dreamt the bare,
The Night before your Birth, breeds me fresh Care.
It prophesy'd, ere many Years expire,
Inflamed Troy must burn with Greekish Fire.
As Venus favours you, because she gain'd
A doubtful Prize by you; yet the disdain'd
And vanquish'd Goddesses, disgrac'd so late,
May bear you hard; I therefore fear their Hate
Poems on several Occasions.

Nor make no Question, but if I consoled you,
And for a Ravisher our Greece report you;
War will be wag'd with Troy, and you shall rue
The Sword (alas!) your Conquest shall pursue.
When Hypodamia, at her Bridal Feast,
Was rudely ravish'd by her Centaur Guest;
Because the Salvages the Bride durst seize,
War grew betwixt them and the Lapythes.
O think you Menelaus hath no Spleen?
Or that he hath not Power to avenge his Teen?
Or that old Tyndarus this Wrong can smother?
Or the two famous Twins, each lov'd of other?

So where your Valour and rare Deeds you boast,
And warlike Spirits in which you triumph most;
By which you have attain'd 'mongst Soldiers Grace,
None will believe you, that but sees your Face.
Your Feature, and fair Shape, is fitter far
For amorous Courtships, than remorseful War.
Let rough-hew'd Soldiers warlike Dangers prove,
'Tis pity Paris should do ought save Love.
Hector (whom you so praise) for you may fight;
I'll find you War to skirmish every Night,
Which shall become you better. Were I wife,
And bold withal, I might obtain the Prize:
In such sweet single Combats, Hand to Hand,
'Gainst which no Woman that is wise will stand.
My Champion I'll encounter Breast to Breast,
Tho I were sure to fall, and be o'erprest.

If that you private Conference intreat me,
I apprehend you, and you cannot cheat me:
I know the Meaning, durt I yield thereto,
Of what you would confer, what you would do.
You are too forward, you too far would wade;
But yet (God knows) your Harvest's in the Blade.
My tired Pen shall here its Labour end,
A guilty Sense in thievish Lines I send.

Speak
Poems on several Occasions.

Speak next when your Occasion best persuades,
By Clymene and Æthra my two Maids.*

The passionate Shepherd to his Love.

LIVE with me, and be my Love,
And we will all the Pleasure prove,
That Hills and Valleys, Dale and Field,
And all the craggy Mountains yield.
There will we sit upon the Rocks,
And see the Shepherds feed their Flocks,
By shallow Rivers, by whose Falls
Melodious Birds sing Madrigals.
There will I make thee Beds of Roses,
With a thousand fragrant Posies;
A Cap of Flowers, and a Girdle
Imbroider'd all with Leaves of Myrtle;
A Gown made of the finest Wool,
Which from our pretty Lambs we pull;
Fair lined Slippers for the Cold,
With Buckles of the purest Gold;
A Belt of Straw and Ivy Buds,
With Coral Clasps, and Amber Studs.
And if these Pleasures may thee move,
Then live with me, and be my Love.
The Shepherd Swains shall dance and sing,
For thy Delight each May Morning.
If these Delights thy Mind may move,
Then live with me, and be my Love.

* N.B. The Translation of these Epistles is loose, and not without Errors, and yet they justify what I have said in the Preface, concerning Shakespear's Learning.
Poems on several Occasions.

The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd.

If that the World and Love were young,
And Truth in every Shepherd's Tongue;
These pretty Pleasures might me move
To live with thee, and be thy Love.
Time drives the Flocks from Field to Fold,
When Rivers rage, and Rocks grow cold;
And Philomel becometh dumb,
And all complain of Cares to come.
The Flowers do fade, and wanton Fields
To wayward Winter reckoning yield:
A honey Tongue, a Heart of Gall,
Is Fancy's Spring, but Sorrow's Fall.
Thy Gowns, thy Shoes, thy Bed of Roses,
Thy Cap, thy Girdle, and thy Posies;
Some break, some wither, some forgotten,
In Folly ripe, in Reason rotten.
Thy Belt of Straw and Ivy Buds;
Thy Coral Clasps, and Amber Studs,
All these in me no means can move
To come to thee, and be thy Love.
But could Youth last, and Love still breed,
Had Joys no Date and Age no need;
Then these Delights my Mind might move
To live with thee, and be thy Love.

Another of the same Nature.

Come live with me, and be my Dear,
And we will revel all the Year
In Plains and Groves, on Hills and Dales,
Where fragrant Air breeds sweetest Gales,
There shall you have the beauteous Pine,
The Cedar, and the Spreading Vine,
And all the Woods to be a Skreen,
Left Phobus kisses my Summer's Queen.
Poems on several Occasions.

The Seat of your Disport shall be,
Over some River, in a Tree;
Where silver Sands and Pebbles sing
Eternal Ditties to the Spring.
There you shall see the Nymphs at play,
And how the Satyrs spend the Day:
The Fishes gliding on the Sands,
Offering their Bellies to your Hands;
The Birds, with heavenly-tuned Throats,
Possess Woods Echoes with sweet Notes;
Which to your Senses will impart
A Musick to inflame the Heart.
Upon the bare and leafless Oak,
The Ring-Doves Wooings will provoke
A colder Blood than you possess,
To play with me, and do no less.
In Bowers of Laurel trimly dight,
We will outwear the silent Night,
While Flora busy is to spread
Her richest Treasure on our Bed.
The Glow-worms shall on you attend,
And all their sparkling Lights shall spend;
All to adorn and beautify
Your Lodging with most Majesty:
Then in my Arms will I inclose
Lillies fair Mixture with the Rose;
Whose love Perfections in Love's Play,
Shall tune me to the highest Key.
Thus as we pass the welcome Night
In sportful Pleasures and Delight,
The nimble Fairies on the Grounds
Shall dance and sing melodious Sounds.
If these may serve for to intice,
Your Presence to Love's Paradise;
Then come with me, and be my Dear,
And we will strait begin the Year.

TAKE,
TAKE, O! take those Lips away,
That so sweetly were forsworn;
And those Eyes, the Break of Day,
Lights which do mislead the Morn.
But my Kísses bring again,
Seals of Love, tho' seal'd in vain.

Hide, O! hide those Hills of Snow,
Which thy frozen Bosom bears,
On whose Tops the Pinks that grow,
Are of those that April wears.
But my poor Heart first set free,
Bound in those icy Chains by thee.

LET the Bird of lowest Lay,
On the sole Arabian Tree,
Herald sad, and Trumpet be,
To whose Sound chaste Wings obey,
But thou shrieking Harbinger,
Foul Procurer of the Fiend,
Augur of the Fever's End,
To this Troop come thou not near.
From this Session interdict
Every Fowl of Tyrant Wing,
Save the Eagle feather'd King,
Keep the Obsequy so strict;
Let the Priest in Surplice white,
That defunctive Musick ken,
Be the Death-divining Swan,
Left the Requiem lack his Right.
And thou treble-dated Crow,
That thy fable Gender mak'st,
With the Breath thou giv'st and tak'st,
'Mongst our Mourners shalt thou go.
Here the Anthem doth commence,
Love and Constancy is dead,
Phoenix and the Turtle fled
In a mutual flame from hence.
So they loved as Love in twain
Had the Essence but in one;
Two Distincts but in none;
Number there in Love was slain:
Hearts remote, yet not asunder,
Distance, and no Space was seen
'Twixt thy Turtle and his Queen,
But in them it were a Wonder.
So between them Love did shine,
That the Turtle saw his Right
Flaming in the Phoenix' Sight,
Either was the other's mine.
Property was thus appalled,
That the self was not the same,
Single Natures, double Name,
Neither two nor one was called.
Reason in it self confounded,
Saw Division grow together,
To themselves yet either neither
Simple were so well compounded,
That it cried how true a twain
Seemeth this concordant one,
Love hath Reason, Reason none,
If what parts can so remain.
Whereupon it made this Threne
To the Phoenix and the Dove,
Co-Supremes and Stars of Love,
As Chorus to their tragick Scene.

Threnes.

Beauty, Truth and Rarity,
Grace in all Simplicity,
Hence inclosed, in Cinders lie:

Death
282 Poems on several Occasions.

Death is now the Phoenix Nest,
And the Turtle’s loyal Breast
To Eternity doth rest;
Leaving no Posterity,
’Twas not their Infirmity,
It was married Chastity.
Truth may seem, but cannot be;
Beauty brag, but ’tis not she;
Truth and Beauty buried be.
To this Urn let those repair,
That are either true or fair;
For these dead Birds sigh a Prayer.

WHY should this Desart be,
For it is unpeopled? No,
Tongue I’ll hang on every Tree,
That shall civil Sayings show.
Some how brief the Life of Man
Runs his erring Pilgrimage,
That the stretching of a Span
Buckles in his Sum of Age.
Some of violated Vows
’Twixt the Souls of Friend and Friend;
But upon the fairest Boughs,
Or at every Sentence’ End
Will I Rosalinda write;
Teaching all that read to know,
The Quintessence of every Sprite,
Heaven would in little show.
Therefore Heaven Nature charg’d,
That one Body should be fill’d
With all Graces wide enlarg’d;
Nature presently distill’d
Helen’s Cheek, but not her Heart,
Cleopatra’s Majesty;
Atalanta’s better Part,
Sad Lucretia’s Modesty.

Thus
Thus Rosalind of many Parts,
By heavenly Synods was devis'd,
Of many Faces, Eyes and Hearts,
To have the Touches dearest priz'd.
Heaven would these Gifts she should have,
And I to live and die her Slave.

The End of Shakespear's Poems.
Remarks

On the Plays

of Shakespeare.

I have in my Essay, prefix'd to this Volume, laid down Rules, by which the Reader may judge of the Mistakes of our Poet so far, as by his Authority not to be drawn into an Imitation of his Errors, by mistaking them for Beauties. I shall now, in these Remarks, point out the Beauties of this Author, which are worthy the Observation of all the ingenious Lovers of this Art, and those who desire to arrive at any Perfection in it.

Mr. Rowe has very well observ'd, that the Fable is not the Province of the Drama, in which the Strength and M
Mastery of Shakespeare lies; yet I shall give a Scheme of all his Plots, that so we may the more easily see how far he has succeeded by the Force of Nature, and where he has fail'd. I begin in the Order in which they are printed in this new Edition, and in the first we find his Tempest.

The Argument or Fable of the Tempest.

Prospero, Duke of Milan, being entirely given up to his Study, reposeth the Trust of the Government in his Brother Antonio, who having all the Sovereignty but the Name, is unsatisfy'd till he obtains that by Treason. Wherefore having made a secret Compact with the King of Naples, he lets him into Milan in the Night; and seizing his Brother and his Infant-Daughter, sends them out to Sea in a tatter'd unrigg'd Boat: Gonzalo, who by the Tyrant was commanded to put this in execution, out of his own Compassion, furniseth him with some Provision, and some of his own Books. Being thus defenceless, left to the mercy of the Ocean, Providence drove him on a barren Island, where he found no body but a sort of Incubus, Son to a notorious Witch of Algiers. And here he liv'd twelve Years in Solitude, and in the Study and Exercise of the Art of Natural Magick. Till now the same King of Naples, his only Son, and Antonio, Prospero's treacherous Brother, and others, returning from marrying the Daughter of Naples to the King of Tunis, fall into his Spells. For Prospero raising a Storm, has them all cast away on this barren enchanted Island, tho' none of them perish in the Wreck—Here the Play begins—These Princes being all cast ashore, and dipp'd in the Island, the Pangs of their evil Deeds, and the suppos'd Loss of the King's Son, torment the guilty King, and some of his Train; while his Son—indeed is, by Prospero's Spirits, brought to the sight of Miranda, Prospero's Daughter, who before had seen none of Mankind but her Father. The young Pair fall mutually in Love with each other. The King likewise, and his Train, having undergone great Pains,
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Pains, Agonies, and Terrors, are brought to Prospero's Cave by his Spirit Ariel: where having been upbraided by Prospero, who owns himself to them, they are all reconcil'd, Prospero's Daughter being to be marry'd to Ferdinand, the King's Son; so, with the Promise of a prosperous Voyage, the Play ends.

I can't find that this Plot was taken from any Novel, at least not from any that Mr. Langbaine had seen, who was very conversant with Books of that nature: But it does not at all follow that there was no such Story in any of the Books of his time, which might never reach our Age, nor is it of much Importance.

Tho' the Fable of this Play may come short of Perfection in some Particulars, yet I must say this, That we have few on the English Stage, that can compare with it for Excellence. For first it is the Imitation of one Action; i.e., The Restoration of Prospero to his Duchy of Milan. The Action is of a just Extent, for it has a Beginning, Middle, and End. The casting away of the King of Naples, Antonio, &c., on the Enchanted Island, is plainly the Beginning, since to this there is nothing necessary to be before: it is the Sequel indeed of something else, but not the Effect. Thus their being cast on the Coast, produces all that happens to them till the Discovery, which is the Middle: and when Prospero is reconcil'd by their Sufferings, and his Passions abated, the Middle, which is their Sufferings, produces the End, in the Reconciliation of the Parties. Here is likewise in this Fable a Peripety and Discovery. For the State, Condition and Fortune of the King is chang'd from the extremest Misery to Happiness, by the Discovery of Prospero and Ferdinand. 'Tis true, the Discovery of Prospero is not so fine as that of Ulysses by the Nurse, but it is every whit as good as the Discovery that Ulysses makes of himself to the Shepherds. There is a perfect Unity in the Action, and in the Time; which tho' a little confusedly express'd (which I attribute to the repeated Errors of the Editors, not to Shakespeare) yet it is concluded by Alonso and the Sailors to be but three Hours. Prospero, in the first Act demands of his Spirit Ariel—'What is the Time of the Day'—who

answers;
answers; Ariel. 'Past the mid Season. Prof. At least
two Glasses. The Time 'twixt six and now must by
us be spent most preciously.'

Aed 5. Scene 1.

'Prof. How's the Day?
'Ariel. On the sixth Hour, at which time, my Lord,
you said our Work should cease.
'Prof. I did say so, when first I rais'd the Tempest.'

The whole Time, from the raising the Storm to the end of the Play, is but six Hours: The Play plainly opens at the very end of the Storm, so that we cannot suppose it more than three Hours and an half; which is far more regular in that Particular, than any that I know of on the Stage. The Unity of Place is not quite so regular; and yet we have few Plays that excel it, even in this Particular. But if the Scene of the Storm were out, and which has very little to do there, the Place would be brought into a much less Compass, and the several Scenes may very well be allow'd to be reasonably suppos'd pretty contiguous. At least when two Gentlemen set themselves to alter a Poet of Shakespeare's Genius, one would expect that they should endeavour to correct his Errors, not to add more. It had been extremely easy for Sir William—and Mr. Dryden to have remedy'd this Particular, which they have not at all attempted; nay, they have added nothing, but what makes their Composition not only much less perfect, but infinitely more extravagant than this Poem, which they pretend to alter; as I shall shew when I come to the Characters. Shakespeare has met with this Fortune in many of his Plays, while Mr. Durfey and Mr. Cibber have only given us their wise Whimseys for what they blotted out of the Poet. The Pretenders to alter this Poet should never meddle with him, unless they could mend his Fable and Conduct; since they can never give us the Manners, Sentiments, Passions, and Diction, finer and more perfect than they find them in the Original.
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As the Fable has all these Advantages, so is the Conduct of the Play very regular. Aristotele divides the Parts of Quantity of a Play into four Parts, which he calls the Prologue, the Episode, the Exode, and the Chorus. By the Prologue he does not mean what is now-a-days spoke before the Play, and has seldom any relation to the Play, and will therefore serve any other Play as well as that to which it is spoken; but by the Prologue here is understood all our first Act, and it is to explain to the Audience not only what concerns the Subject of the Poem, but what is proper and necessary, and makes a true Part of it. Thus Prospero, to satisfy his Daughter of the Cause of his rearing the Storm, very artfully lets the Audience know the material part of his History which past before that Hour; and that necessarily: for it was not only natural for Miranda to inquire into the Cause of so terrible a Storm, the Effects of which had extremely mov'd her Compassion, and the Work that was going to be done by Prospero, seems to mark out that as the only proper time that he could ever have related his Fortunes to her, and inform her of her Condition, and that he had now got all his Enemies into his Hands. 'Tis true, this Narration may seem a little too calm, and that it had been more Dramatick, had it been told in a Passion; but if we consider the Story as Prospero tells it, it is not without a Pathos. And if this first Narration could be brought under this Censure, yet the second is far from it, being very artfully thrown into a sort of Passion or Anger against Ariel, and is therefore truly Dramatick; for in the Drama indeed there should be very little that is not Action and Passion. It was very necessary likewise, that when the Poet was giving the Audience a Creature of his own Formation, he should let them know whence he sprung; his very Origin preparing us for a Character so much out of the way, and makes us expect that Language from him which he utters. But there being still some things done which fell not into the knowledge of Prospero, and yet were necessary to be known to the Audience, the Poet, in the first Scene of the second Act, makes the shipwreck'd Princes discover it very judiciously.
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The next to the Prologue is the Episode, which was all that us'd formerly to go betwixt the four Chorus's, which with us is the second, third and fourth Act; that is, it contains all the Subject of the Play, or rather the Intrigues and Plot till the Unravelling. And the Exode, which was all that came after the last singing of the Chorus, contain'd the Peripety and Discovery, or the unravelling of the Plot; which answer'd our fifth Act, and is the Unravelling or Catastrophe of the Piece. This Division of Aristotle is perfectly observ'd by Shakespear, in the Conduct of this Play of the Tempest: For, as we have seen, the first Act discovers all that was necessary for the Audience to know of the Story, that happen'd before the Commencement of the Action of the Play, and that in an admirable and judicious manner. Next, all the Intrigue of the Play, as the several Adventures and Torments of the King, the uniting the Hearts of Miranda and Ferdinand, and the Attempts of the Mob-Characters, make up the second, third and fourth Acts; the fifth is wholly employ'd in the Discovery and Peripety, or in the unravelling of the Plot, and restoring Tranquillity to all the Dramatick Persons. The Scene likewise is generally unbroken; especially in the first, fourth and fifth, they are perfectly entire. The Manners are every way just, they are well mark'd, and convenient and equal; there is no room here for the Likeness, the Story being a Fiction. Thus we find every one perfectly distinct from the other: Caliban, as born of a Witch, shews his Original, Malice, Ill-Nature, Sordidness and Villany. Antonio is always ambitious and treacherous, and even there promoting and persuading Sebastian to the committing the same unnatural Act against his Brother, that he had against Prospero; with this Aggravation, of adding Fratricide to Usurpation.

The Sentiments are every where the just Effect of the Manners, and the Diction generally just and elegant, as we shall see in those beautiful Thoughts I shall add to my Remarks on this Play. But I can't leave my general Consideration of this Play, till I have added a word about the most
most questionable part of it; and that is the Magick or
Sorcery.

Those who make this a Fault in our Poet, know little
of the matter; for it is sufficient for him to go upon re-
ceived Notions, no matter whether philosophically or abso-
lutely true, or not. Shakespeare liv'd in an Age not so
remote from a time in which the Notion of Spirits and
Conjurers, and the strange and wonderful Power of
Magick were so common, that it was almost an Article
of Faith among the many; I mean not the very Mob,
but Men of Figure and true Learning. Ariofto is full
of this, and instead of one enchanted Isle, gives us
many enchanted Castles. Nay, Lavater and several o-
thers have wrote seriously upon this head. Mizaldus
gives us many Receipts for magical Operations; and
the Rosicrucians and Cabalists profess a Conversation
with Spirits of the Earth, the Air, Water, and Ele-
mental Fire. Dr. Beaumont has even in our time wrote
a Book in English upon this head, and has declar'd to
many his frequent Conversation with these Hobgoblins:
nor is there to this day scarce a venerable Citizen or Coun-
try Squire, but as firmly believes these Beings, as they do
their own. And tho' it is not our business here, to enter
into the Examination of this Point Philosophically, com-
mon Opinion being sufficient to justify Shakespeare; yet
perhaps the nicest Philosopher would be puzzled to de-
monstrate the Fallhood of this Notion. At least we are
sure that there are Spirits departed, since the Scripture it
self affirms us of it. The same would hold against Virgil
and Homer, for their Cyclops, their Harpies, their Circys,
&c. if common Opinion could not clear them. Our Poet
therefore is at least on as good a bottom in this, as those
great Men of Antiquity; and has manag'd these Machines
as well as either of them, in this Play.

The Reader having seen all the Beauties of the Fable,
Conduct, and Manners of this Play, may perhaps think
it would not be from the Purpose, if I should take some
notice of the Alteration made of it by Mr. Dryden and
Sir William Davenant: and since it seems a sort of Jus-
tice to Shakespeare, I shall venture to shew how far they
have been from improving our Author. Mr. Dryden in

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his Preface, after he has told us, that the Play itself had been acted with success, and that Fletcher and Sir John Suckling had made bold with our Poet in their Sea-Voyage and the Goblins—adds—Sir William Davenant, as he was a Man of a quick and piercing Imagination, soon found that somewhat might be added to the Design of Shakespear, of which neither Fletcher nor Suckling had ever thought (something I hope to add to his Excellence, or else it had better never have been added) and therefore to put the last hand to it, he design'd the Counterpart to Shakespear's Plot; namely, that of a Man who had never seen a Woman: that by this means these two Characters of Innocence and Love might the more illustrate and commend each other.

He farther tells us his Approbation of Sir William's Design: But with submission to so great a Man as Mr. Dryden must be allow'd to be in his way, I think he had very little reason for his Approbation. For let us consider but the Rules of true Judgment, and we shall find, that what these Gentlemen have done, could be only advantageous to our Author, by improving the Fable and Conduct, the Manners, the Sentiments, the Diction, &c. but Mr. Dryden, in what is quoted, seems to place all the Benefit of the Alteration in the Counterpart of his Plot; i.e. A Man that had never seen a Woman, that by this means these two Characters of Innocence and Love might the more illustrate and commend each other. That is, by spoiling the natural Innocence and Character of Miranda, to foist in some Scenes betwixt a Company of unequal and inconsistent Characters; which are sometimes mere Naturals indeed, and at other times Proficients in Philosophy.

But what did these Characters, or what do these Scenes towards the improving the Plot? It has every where broken the Scenes, and embarass'd the Conduct; but scarce any where added the least Beauty to make amends, unless in Prospero's separating Ferdinand and the Father, in his Rage, and his Threats of his Death, making the meeting of Father and Son the more distressful, by so sudden a Calamity in their Joy. Every where else the Alterations are
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are monstrous, especially in the Manners and Sentiments; to shew which, I shall give some Instances.

Dorinda says to her Father, on his examining of her about seeing the Man——

• Dor. No, Sir, I am as well as ever I was in all my Life,
• But that I cannot eat nor drink for thought of him, &c.

She saw him but the last Scene of the second Act, and this is the first Scene of the third Act; so what time she had to try whether she could eat or not, I cannot tell, unless it was her Afternoon's Nunchion (as the Children call it) for it was near four, as Ariel assure'd us. But all that Scene indeed between Prospero and Dorinda, (a Creature of our Corrector's making, not of Shakespeare's, but more out of Nature, and more inconsistent than Caliban) has nothing at all Dramatick in it, nor any thing conducive to the Fable, Conduit, or Plot. It discovers nothing of the least use, and only gives a very imperfect Sketch of the insensible Approaches of Love in Innocence and Ignorance, and may perhaps be worthy the Contemplation of the young Muses of the Nursery.

Enter eight fat Spirits with Cornucopia's in their hands. These fat Spirits, I confess, are very surprizing and merry, tho' never thought of by Shakespeare.

The Discourse in Eccho betwixt Ferdinand and Ariel, if tolerable in prose, is beyond measure ridiculous and trifling in singing. Ferdinand seems too full of Despair and Concern, to have that petty whim of Curiosity come into his head: and therefore I presume no body will think That any Improvement of Shakespeare's Play, unless it be in adding the Mode, which was afterwards in the Rehearsal;

And then to serious Business we'll advance,
But first let's have a Dance.
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But our Improvers have never been eminent for their Imitations of Nature in the Drama; Mr. Dryden had wander'd too far in Romance, to relish Nature, or know how to copy her: Tho' in his latter Plays, Age had worn something of that away; and he has given us some Scenes worthy his Greatness in other Parts of Poetry, in which lay his Excellence. But to go on —

Soon after this, Mirinda seeing Ferdinand by an odd Caprice (which we never cou'd expect from her Character, as drawn in Shakespeare) she fancies him a Spirit: Tho' she had before seen Hippolito, and had been told that he was a Man, and affur'd by her Father that she should soon see another Man of riper Growth than him she had seen. But this artless trifling Ignorance of Miranda spoils that Character Shakespeare has given her, where she is innocent indeed, but not a Fool: Whereas this might be call'd, as alter'd, The Comedy of Fools.

But now for Hippolito, bred to Books and Philosophy under so wise a Master as Prospero.

Hippolito and Prospero.

' Hip. Methinks I wish, and wish for what I know not:
' But still I wish:——Yet if I had that Woman,
' She, I believe, cou'd tell me what I wish for.'

This is indeed indulging Fancy with a vengeance, and throwing all Art, Nature, and Judgment aside, as useless. Certainly the first wishes of Innocence in Love must be the Company of the Object belov'd; and that he might easily find and tell. But why should he fancy (if it were not absurd to ask a Reason for any thing in such a Character) that the Woman could tell him what he wish'd for, when he did not know himself?

' Prosp. What would you do to make that Woman yours?
' Hip. I'd quit the rest of the World, that I might be alone with her; she never should be from me, &c.'

This is Nature indeed, and this is the real Effect of a real Passion: this is what Tibullus, that tender Lover, said about 1700 Years ago ———

Sic
Sic ego secretis possim bene vivere silvis,
Qua nulla humano sit via trita pede.
Tu mihi Curarum Requies, in nocte vel atra
Lumen, & in solis tu mihi turba Locis, &c.

But then our young Lover, if he would have main-
tain'd his Character of Innocence and Love, should have
kept to that point; and not immediately after, con-
trary to the Nature of Love and Innocence, run mad
for all the Women in the world, as if not bred in a
Cave, but a Brothel. This has neither Sense nor Rea-
son in it, but is perfectly monstrous. In the beginning
of this Scene betwixt him and Ferdinand, he discovers
all the Symptoms of a real Passion: which makes his
after Extravagance impossible in Nature, even for a
Debauche, at least till Enjoyment was past.

Ferdinand's fighting him is a monstrous Incident, and
an intolerable Breach of his Character, and contrary to
the Manners; he not being only a tender Srippling,
but as ignorant of a Sword as a very Woman: as is
plain in the Scene before the Duel; for Hippolito has
desired his Friendship, and told him, That next a Wo-
man, he found he could love him.

This, with his Ignorance and Innocence, ought to
have deter'd a Man of any Honour, especially a Prince
of no ill Character, from committing so barbarous and
inhuman a Murder for a childish Impertinence.

But here we must have a nice Touch at Jealousy: Miranda tells him,

'——That he is a Stranger,
'Wholly unacquainted with the World, &c.'

But all this will not do: Ferdinand must be jealous
without any reason, to make him the more resolute in
so scandalous an Attempt as the killing of Hippolito; at
least, of wounding him so, that nothing but Moly, and
the Influence of the Moon, forc'd down by his good
Angel, could recover him to Life again. 'Tis true, when Ferdinand proves such a Coxcomb to be jealous
on what Miranda says of Hippolito, tho' she had affir'd him of her Love, and, as far as appear'd to him, ventur'd her Father's Displeasure by coming to him; we may easily suspect he would be guilty of any Folly, nay the Villany of fighting with Hippolito: nay, it was a mercy that he did not draw on Miranda too, for it had been full as hercick.

Dorinda is more sensible of Nature and Love than Hippolito; she can tell that he can truly love but one at a time, and naturally resents his professing, that he will have all the Women. But he is more learn'd in the World in this fourth Act than in the former; I suppose he had receiv'd some Intelligence of the Incontinence of the Men of this World, from one of the Devils of Sycorax: for he says——

'I've heard Men have Abundance of them there——

Of whom could he hear this? Of Prospero? Impossible! His business had all along been to fright him from the Conversation of Women, making them Enemies and noxious to Men, and his Safety; which is directly contrary to the letting him know, that other Men had convers'd with so many without hurt. In this place indeed, a Poeta loquitur had not been amiss. He had convers'd with no body but Ferdinand once: who, tho' he told him, that there were more Women in the World, yet was so far from letting him know that one had many, that he told him that one Man was to have but one Woman.

But as knowing as Hippolito is in some things, and in some lucid Intervals, he knows not a word of Death; tho' we must think he had read strange Books, and heard odd Instructions, that could leave him so entirely ignorant of that point: But were this just, yet that very Ignorance makes Ferdinand still the more inexcusable. Nay, Ferdinand himself at last, in the fourth Act, seems sensible of his Ignorance: for he says——
He's so ignorant, that I pity him; and fain would avoid Force——

And indeed a Man would think, that he might very easily avoid Force if he would, at least till Hippolito had seiz'd his Mistress, which he had sufficient reason to imagine, that Prospero would never permit. But he that notwithstanding all that had past between them, could not before this find out his Ignorance, may do any thing.

But Hippolito in one Line says he does not know what Right is, and yet in the next tells us of Baseness and Honour. His Lectures were very peculiar, that could give him a Notion of one, and not of the other.

The Terms of the Combat or Duel are as ridiculous as all the rest——that is——to fight till Blood is drawn from one of the two, or his Sword taken from him. Ferdinand was resolv'd to be on the sure side of the hedge with him; but he is so dull of Apprehension, that he may well be a Rascal: for as Monsieur Rochefoucauld says, 'A Fool has not Matter enough to make an honest Man of.' Tho' Hippolito had told him, that they had no Swords growing in their World, yet Ferdinand did not find it out, till he had wounded him, that he was unskilful in his Weapon.

I'm loth to kill you, Sir, you are unskilful.'

Risum teneatis? Was ever such stuff written since the time of Gammar Gurton's Needle? But it would be endless to observe all the Blunders of these added Scenes; they are all of a piece, and scarce guilty of a Thought, which we could justly attribute to Shakespeare. I have given Instances enough, I hope, to shew what I propos'd, that the Alteration has been no Benefit to the Original.

I shall only take notice of some fine things in this Play, both as to Topicks, and Descriptions, and moral Reflections; and then pass to the next.
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Ariel's Description of his managing the Storm, is worth remarking; and Ferdinand's Speech, when Prospero is leading him away, at the end of the first Act, is pathetic, and justly expresses the Nature of a true Lover.

- My Father's Lofs, the Weakness that I feel,
- The Wreck of all my Friends, nor this Man's Threats,
- To whom I am subdued, are but light to me,
- Might I but thro' my Prison once a day
- Behold this Maid. All Corners else of the Earth
- Let Liberty make use of; Space enough
- Have I in such a Prison.

I must not omit the Description, that Francisco makes in the second Act, of Ferdinand's swimming ashore in the Storm.

- I saw him beat the Surges under him,
- And ride upon their backs; he trod the Water,
- Who's Enmity he hung aside; and breasted
- The Surge most swoln, that met him. His bold Head
- Bove the contentious Waves he kept, and oared
- Himself with his good Arms in lusty Strokes
- To th' Shore; that o'er his wave-worn Back bow'd,
- As stooping to relieve him.

The Reader may compare this with Otway's Description of Jaffier's Escape. His Reflections and Moralizing on the frail and transitory State of Nature, are wonderfully fine.

- Prop. These our Actors,
- As I foretold you, were all Spirits, and
- Are melted into Air, into thin Air,
- And like the baseless Fabrick of their Vision,
- The cloud-capt Towers, the gorgeous Palaces,
- The solemn Temples, the great Globe it self;
- Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
- And, like this insubstantial Pageant faded,
- Leave not a Track behind. We are such Stuff
- As Dreams are made of; and our little Life
- Is rounded with a Sleep.
The Argument of The Two Gentlemen of Verona.

Though this Play be plac'd after the Tempest, 'tis evident from the Writing, and the Faults, and even Absurdities, that it was writ long before it; for I can by no means think that Shakespeare wrote worse and worse: for if his Fire may be suppos'd to abate in his Age, yet certainly his Judgment increas'd: But most of the Faults of this Play are Faults of Judgment more than Fancy.

Valentine and Protheus are two intimate, bosom, nay sworn Friends, Natives of Verona, and give the Name to the Play. Valentine is for travelling (tho indeed the Journey is not long) and Protheus is in love with a beautiful Lady, named Julia, of the same Town. Valentine being arriv'd at Milan, succeeds in his Amour with Silvia, the Duke's Daughter; whose Lover, Sir Thurio, is favour'd by the Father as a Man of large Demesnes, but he is silly, insolent, and cowardly. Valentine is not long gone from home, but Antonio, Sir Protheus's Father, will send him to travel too; especially to Milan, where his Friend had acquir'd so good a Reputation. He takes leave of his Mistress privately, and gives her his Oaths and Vows that he will love only her till Death. But coming to Milan, he falls in love with Silvia, his Friend's Mistress; and to compass his own Ends, discovers the Amour betwixt her and Valentine to the Duke, tho trusted as a Friend by the Lovers. This causes the Banishment of Valentine, and the Misery of the Lady who lov'd him extremely. Protheus, on the credit of his having a Mistress in his own City, with whom he was mightily in love, gets the management of Sir Thurio's Passion: and under that pretence, makes it his endeavour to promote his own; which Julia, being come to Milan in Man's Clothes, discovers, and is taken by him for a Rage. Silvia being weary of Sir Thurio's Suit, and eager to be with her Lover Valentine, engages Sir Eglamour to assist her in making her Escape to

Manua.
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Mantua, where she heard that he was; tho' he indeed was taken by the Out-laws about three Leagues out of Milan, and made their Captain. These same Out-laws seize Silvia, who is resc'ed from the Force of one of them by Sir Protheus, got thither in pursuit of her; who pressing his Amour here in vain, attempts to ravish her, but is prevented by Valentine, who had over-heard all his Treachery: But on Sir Protheus's Repentance, all Animosities are forgot, and Sir Protheus returns to his old Mistress Julia here discover'd, and Silvia is by the Duke given to Valentine, Sir Thurio not daring to claim her; nay, out of feasts of Valentine, he gives her up in disdain.

Besides the Defect of the Plot, which is too visible to criticize upon, the Manners are no where agreeable or convenient: Silvia and the rest not behaving themselves like Princes, Noblemen, or the Sons and Daughters of such. The Place where the Scene is, by the original Error of the Press, not yet corrected (for to be sure the Author could not make the Blunder) is sometimes the Emperor's Court, sometimes Milan, and sometimes Padua; as is plain, from running the eye over it.

But how defective ever this Interlude may be in the Plot, Conduct, Manners and Sentiments, we yet shall see, that it is not destitute of Lines that discover the Author to be Shakespeare.

Love, or against Love when sighted.

To be in love where Scorn is bought with Groans;
Coy Looks with heart-soft Sighs; one fading Moment's Mirth
With twenty watchful, weary, tedious Nights.
If haply won, perhaps a hapless Gain;
If lost, why then a grievous Labour won!
However, but a Folly bought with Wit,
Or else a Wit by Folly vanquished.

On Love

Oh! how this Spring of Love resembleth
The uncertain Glory of an April Day;

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Which now shows all the Beauty of the Sun,
And by and by a Cloud takes all away.

A Comical Description of Men in Love.

Speed.——First you have learned, (like Sir Proteus) to wrathe your Arms like a Malecontent: to relish a Love-Song like a Robin-red-breast: to walk alone like one that had the Pestilence: to sigh like a School-boy, that had lost his A B C: to weep like a young Wench; that had lost her Grandam: to fast like one that takes Diet: to watch like one that fears robbing: to speak puling like a Beggar at Hollow-Mass. You were wont, when you laugh'd, to crow like a Cock: when you walk'd, to walk like one of the Lions: when you fasted, 'twas presently after Dinner: when you look'd sadly, it was for want of Money: And now you are so metamorphosed with a Mistref, that when I look on you, I can hardly think you my Master.

You must observe, that this is the Speech of a pert Page to his Love-sick Master, and that will atone for some of the Similes, while the Humour is pleasant.

On Banishment for Love.

Val. And why not Death, rather than living Torment?
To die is to be banished from my self! And Silvia is my self. Banish'd from her, Is self from self! a deadly Banishment!
What Light is Light, if Silvia be not seen? What Joy is Joy, if Silvia be not by?
Unless it be to think that she is by,
And feed upon the Shadow of Perfection!
Except I be by Silvia in the Night,
There is no Musick in the Nightingale:
Unless I look on Silvia in the Day,
There is no Day for me to look upon:
She is my Essence, and I leave to be,
If I be not by her fair Influence
Foster'd, illumin'd, cherish'd, kept alive.

This
This is extremely pathetick, as indeed all the following Scene is betwixt him and his false Friend Sir Protheus.

On Hope.

Hope is a Lover's Staff——walk hence with that, And manage it against despairing Thoughts.

Sir Protheus's Advice to Sir Thurio, in the managing his Addresses to Silvia, is pretty and spritely. I can't omit the words of Julia expressing her Condition, when slighted by her Lover.

——But since she did neglect her Looking-Glass, And threw her Sun-expelling Mask away, The Air has starv'd the Roses in her Cheeks, And pinch'd the Lilly Tincture of her Face, &c.

The fifth Act of this Play is much the best; but Valentine is too easily reconcil'd to a Man, whose Treachery and Villany deserv'd the Stab, especially when it is discover'd at the very time that he goes to ravish his Friend's Betrothed.

The Merry Wives of Windsor.

I cannot pass this Play without a word or two of Comedy in general; tho' I shall be far from laying down all the Rules of that Poem, which tho' not so excellent as Tragedy, yet is valuable enough to merit our Esteem above all others, except the Tragic. This Poem, tho' the last and least encourag'd in the polite times of Athens yet was first and most advance'd in Rome, and in England; for Politeness did not prevail very early in either of those warlike Nations. As we have none of the Greek Comedies extant but those of Aristophanes, who was Master of the old Comedy, except what we have in Terence, who is said to have translated two of Menander's into one of his; so we cannot make a fair Judgment

who
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who excell'd in this Poem, the Greek, the Latin, or the English: yet having those of Plautus and Terence, we may justly, with Mr. Dryden in his Essay, give the Victory to our own Nation over the Romans. We can indeed discover nothing of the Remains of Antiquity in this kind, comparable to Ben Johnson, and to this Play of Shakespear's. This, and our Advantage in Comedy over all the Moderns, is justly prov'd by Mr. Dryden in his Essay on Dramatick Poesy; but I confess I am surpriz'd at the Weakness of his Arguments, in preferring our Tragedies and Tragi-Comedies to those of the Greeks; in which Parallel he has betray'd so great Ignorance, both of the Greek Plays, and of the very Design and Art of Tragedy, that I wonder he corrected not those gross Mistakes before he died; but suffer'd them to pass to Posterity with such Defects, of which he himself was so sensible, as to own, that when he wrote them, he knew little of the Art.

Among these is his Assertion in the beginning of the Discourse, p. 3. that Aristotle had given us no Definition of a Play: his words are these—'He had no sooner said thus, but all desir'd the Favour of him to give the Definition of a Play; and they were the more importunate with him, because neither Aristotle, nor Horace, nor any other, who writ on that Subject, had ever done it—A Play (goes on Mr. Dryden) ought to be a just and lively Image of human Nature, representing its Passions, and Humours, and the Change of Fortune to which it is Subject, for the Delight and Instruction of human kind.'

First, Aristotle has defin'd Tragedy and Comedy too; but did not, like Mr. Dryden, blend things so contrary in their Nature in one Definition, as Tragedy and Comedy. He might indeed well say, that it was a Description rather than a Definition; for what is applicable to all sorts of Dramatick Poetry, to the Epopee and Satire, is no Definition at all. That of Aristotle is more close and to the purpose; for what he has said will not agree in all its Parts with any thing but Tragedy, nor will his Definition of Comedy agree with the former. I think it so material to maintain the Distinction which Nature has made
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made between these two Poems, that I shall set down
the Definitions of both from Aristotle. First, of Tragedy: Tragedy is an Imitation of an Action that is grave; and entire, and hath a just Length, of which the Style is agreeably relieving, but differently in all its Parts; and which, without the Assistance of Narration, by the means of Terror and Compassion, perfectly refines in us all sorts of Passions, or whatever else is like them.

I have already said enough of this Definition, and shall only observe here, that the Action which Tragedy imitates must be Grave; which shews the Defect of Mr. Dryden's Description, for the Imitation of any part of human Life will not come up to that: But all that is not great, solemn, and grave, is left to the Imitation of Comedy, which he thus defines—Comedy is an Imitation of the worst Men, I mean not in all sorts of Vices, but only in Ridicule: For Ridicule is properly a Defect, and Deformity without Pain, and which never contributes to the Destruction of the Subject in which it is.—This is Aristotle's Definition and Explanation of it. He has told the Subject of the Comick Imitation, which is only what is ridiculous; all other sorts of Wickedness and Vice can have no place here, because they raise Indignation or Pity, which are Passions that ought by no means to reign in Comedy. Princes, Kings, and Great Men ought therefore naturally to be excluded the Sock; because Ridicule ought always to be the Subject of this Poem, and those solemn Characters ought never to be made ridiculous.

In all these Particulars, Shakespeare has come up to the Rules and Definition of Aristotle; for he has, in his Characters, chosen the Defects and Deformities, which are without Pain, and which never contribute to the Destruction of the Subject in which it is.

'Tis pity that what Aristotle wrote of Comedy is lost, except this very Definition; but the Loss is the less, because we may very well draw sufficient Rules to walk by in Comedy, from those which remain of Tragedy; observing this difference, that as nothing ridiculous can come into Tragedy, so nothing grave or serious can come into Comedy justly, except it be so artfully join'd
to the Ridiculous, that it seems natural and no Patch: as the Character of Mr. Fenton, in the Play under our Consideration; his Character is the only serious one in the Play.

But as Tragedy has Parts of Quality and Parts of Quantity, so has Comedy. The Parts of Quality, as in the other, are the Fable, the Manners, the Sentiments and the Diction, without which no Comedy can be truly intitled to that Name. The Comick Poet must first invent his Plot, or Fable: and when he has fix’d that, he must take care that the Manners of the diverse Persons be plainly express’d in his Characters; that is, that they be perfectly distinguishing’d, as every one of these of the Merry Wives of Windsor are. The Sentiments are added, because without them there is no knowing the Thoughts, Desigms, and Inclinations of the Dramatick Persons; and these being not to be express’d but by Discourse, the Diction is added. The Fable of Comedy, that is, the comick Fiction or Imitation, must be entirely free from the Marvellous and the Prodigious, which are frequent in Tragedy and the Epopee: for it has no manner of regard to Great, Illustrious, Grave, Mournful, Terrible, or, in one word, Tragical Things, but only Domeick and Civil Incidents and Persons. There is a natural Difference in Persons and Quality, or Manners; for that which is Praise-worthy in one degree, is not so in another, nay it may be a Disgrace: for example, in some Arts; for one of the Vulgar to play well on the Fiddle, or Hautbois, merits Praise; but the same Art in a King is look’d on as trifling, if not despicable. A Woman ought to be a good Sower, Knitter, or the like; at least these Qualities are commendable in a Woman, but ridiculous in a Man. Thus ’tis a praise in a Servant, that he’s no Thief; but it is no Praise to a Nobleman, or a Man of any Figure and Quality. This is sufficient to show, that different Manners are agreeable to different Degrees. To know perfectly therefore what Manners we ought to give to our several Dramatick Persons, we should study these following Precepts of Horace.

Ætatis
REM AR KS on the

Ætatis cæsque notandi sunt tibi Mores,
Mobilibusque Decor naturis dandus & Annis,
Reddere qui voces jam feit Puer, & pede certo
Signat humum, gestit paribus colludere, & Iram
Colligit, ac ponit temere; & mutatur in horas.
Imberbis Juvenis, tandem custode remor
Gaudet Equis, Canibusque, & aprici Gramine campi;
Cereus in vitium fieit, Monitoribus asper,
Utilium tardus Provisor, prodigus Æris;
Sublimis, cupidusq; & amata relinquere Pernix.
Conversis studiis Ætas, animusq; virilis
Querit Opes & Amicitias; servit honoris;
Commisisse caver, quod max mutare laboret.
Multa Senem circumveniunt incommoda; vel quod
Querit, & inventis miser absintet, ac timet uti;
Vel quod res omnes timide, gelidèque ministrat;
Dilator, spe longus; iners, avidusque futuri,
Difficilis, querulus, laudator temporis acti
Se puerò; Censor, Castrigatorq; Minorum.

And to the just observing the Characters, he just before gives this Advice:

Intererit multum, Davusne loquatur, an Heros,
Maturusque Senex, an adhuc florente Juvena,
Fervidus; an Matrona potens, an sedula Nutrix,
Mercatorne vagus, Cultoré virëntis Agelli,
Colchus an Assyris, Thebis nutritus an Argis,
Aut famam sequere, aut sibi conveniens s inge.

And again;

Qui didicit Patre quid debeat, & quid Amicis,
Quo sit amore Pares, quo Frater amandus, & Hosps,
&c.

That is, he who knows the Duties of every Order and Degree of Men, both in regard of themselves and others, is fit to meddle with the Drama.

The Excellence of the Sentiments, is justly to express the Manners, and of the Diction, to give us the Sentiments in a Language agreeable to the Subject; for if it be
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be otherwise, it is abominable. But the Style of Comedy ought not to be so sublime as Tragedy, nor so low as Farce; but still diversify'd, according to the Character and Humour of the Person that speaks.

I should say something here of Humour, but that Mr. Congreve has already handled that Point so nicely, that I refer the Reader to his Letter to Mr. Dennis on that Subject; and I shall only add Mr. Dryden's Definition of it, in his Essay on Dramatick Poesy, which is this.

Humour is the ridiculous Extravagance of Conversation, wherein one Man differs from others. Whether this be expressive enough, I leave to the Reader. But in my mind Humour is what the Antients and Aristotle meant by the Ridiculous; and that, according to Aristotle, it consists in those Vices and Follies of Mind as well as Conversation, which carry with them a ridiculous Appearance. The Passions and Vices of Mankind have two different Faces; one serious, and the other ridiculous; the one supplies Tragedy, the other Comedy. The manner how this is done, may perhaps be better taught by Example than Precept: I would therefore advise a Comick Writer to study Randolph's Muses Looking-Glass thoroughly; for there I am apt to believe, he will find the Source of all Humours that are in Nature: from which Originals he may be able to make such agreeable Compounds, as may divert the People justly to an equal Profit of his Purse and Reputation. At least so much I am very sure of; that no Man can show me any Humour on the Stage that is worth taking notice of, but I will show it in the Muses Looking-Glass; which proves that he has gone to the Source of Things for the Draughts he has made, since those who never read him, have fallen into the Humours he has drawn. He was one of the Sons of the famous Ben Johnson, and of Cambridge.

As for the Parts of Comedy which relate to the Quantity, they are the same with those of Tragedy. That is the Protasis or Prologue, which gives an Insight into the Characters and Design or State of the Action of the Play, and this is generally the first Act; the Episode is all that is contain'd in the second, third or fourth Acts, that is the Intrigue,
Intrigue, and Struggles, and Obstacles of the Plot: and the Exode or Catastrophe is the Unravelling or Discovery, where all things settle in Peace and Tranquillity, with Probability, and to the Satisfaction of the Audience.

Having thus premis'd a general View of Comedy, I shall come more close to this under our present Consideration; and first to the Argument——

The Argument of The Merry Wives of Windsor:

There are two Walks in this Play, but much better join'd, connected and incorporated than in any Play, that I remember, either in Latin or English. The chief Plot, or Walk, is that of exposing the Character of Sir John Falstaff, for his ridiculous Amours or Attempt of two Women at once, when by Years, and other Defects, he could be agreeable to neither, as Mrs. Page and the rest tell him on the Discovery in the fifth Act——

'Why Sir John do you think, tho' we could have thrust Virtue out of our Hearts by Head and Shoulders, and have given our selves without scruple to Hell, that ever the Devil could have made you our Delight? Ford. What a Hodg-Pudding? Mrs. Page. A puff-Man? Page. Old and cold; wither'd, and of intolerable Entrails. Ford. And one that is as slanderous as Satan. Page. As poor as Job. Ford. And as wicked as his Wife.'

Sir John sends two Letters of the same Contents to both the Women, that he lov'd them; but they being: intimate Friends, and both past their Prime, communicate their Letters to each other, consult on his Punishment, and employ to that end Mrs. Quickly, who, in Mrs. Ford's Name, makes the Appointment of Rendezvous. Ford the Husband being of a jealous Temper, has his Suspicion to heighten'd by the Information of two of Sir John's Sharpers, who had refus'd to carry the Letters, and were for that refusal cashier'd, that he resolves to go to Sir John, and, under the Name of Mr. Broom, try what Discovery he could make of the Truth of the Information. He finds the false unwieldy Knight just full of his Success, and gives him Wine and Money to pursue Mrs. Ford, so as to make her Fraillties known...
to him, that he might beat her out of her Retrenchments of pretended Modesty and Virtue to his Wishes. Falstaff, blinded with this Pretence and the Money, tells him of the Appointment, and assures him of Success in his Amours with Ford's Wife. Ford being gone, the Knight moves to the Damsel; who, having by Concert Mrs. Page with her, makes her retire into another Room, till her proper Cue of appearing. Mrs. Ford having already order'd her Servants to get the Buck-basket ready, and on notice to carry and empty it into a Ditch in Dashet-Mead, admits the Knight; who having pass'd his first Compliment, and made his awkward Professions, News is brought that Mrs. Page is coming in, which makes the Knight retire. Mrs. Page tells her, that her Husband and half the Town were coming to search for some Gallant of hers in the House. The Knight is terribly alarm'd, and, as Mrs. Page had propos'd, gets into the Buck-basket; and as he is carrying away, the Husband comes in, but after a little stop, suffers it to be carried away. Thus Sir John is thrown into the Ditch, after he had been strew'd up in dirty Linen all the way; and the Husband exposes his ridiculous Jealousy to no purpose, being not able to find any body in the House. The Knight is appeas'd by Mrs. Quickly, and agrees on another Meeting the next Morning by eight or nine; is again trapan'd by the Husband, to whom, as Mr. Broom, he had told all his past Adventure, and his new Affignation. So being disguis'd, on the Husband's Approach, like the old Witch of Brentford, he is sufficiently beaten by the Husband, and yet gets off, leaving Ford as much confounded and expos'd to the Company for his baseless Jealousy as before; being yet not able to find any body with his Wife. Upon this Mrs. Page and Mrs. Ford agree to let their Husbands into the Secret, and by their Consent to proceed to a third Punishment. This Discovery cures Ford of his Jealousy, and 'tis by all agreed, that the Knight should, as he ought, be expos'd. He is prevail'd on by Mrs. Quickly at last, to meet at Midnight in Windsor-Park, dress'd up as the vulgar-suppos'd Herne the Hunter to appear, etc. Mrs. Ford and Mrs. Page meet him first, and just as he is rejoicing at his good Luck, and dividing himself
himself and Favours betwixt them, Sir Hugh with his Fairies start out of the Saw-pit, where they were hid for that purpose, and pinch and burn him with their Lights; from whom endeavouring to run away, they all come in, and the Discovery is made, and the Knight expos'd to publick Shame as he ought to be. Here the Under-Plot, or second Walk, is join'd in the Conclusion: for Mrs. Anne Page, Mr. Page's handsome Daughter, is in love with Mr. Fenton, a well-bred Gentleman, and of Quality superior to Page, tho' he had been a little wild, and a Companion of the Prince, by which he had something run his Estate a-ground, and for that reason rejected by Page and his Wife. The Father is for Slender, a very sly Country Gentleman of 300 l. a year; the Mother was for Dr. Cain, an impertinent old French Physician, because he was rich, and had Friends at Court. So that the Wife taking this Opportunity of the nocturnal Mask to abuse Sir John Falstaff, orders the Doctor to take her Daughter, who should be dress'd in white, and go off with her and marry her immediately, before the Father could hinder it. The Father had order'd Slender to take his Daughter dress'd in Green, and lead her away to Eaton, and there marry her, without her Mother's Knowledge: but the young Lady loving Fenton, deceives both Father and Mother, to obey both whom she had promis'd, goes and is marry'd to her Beloved; which Discovery coming on that of Sir John's, concludes the Play.

All the other Persons of the Drama, are plainly join'd to, and depending on those two Walks; and their incorporating them into the Plot seems very well contriv'd. The Quarrel betwixt Sir John and Justice Shallow, occasions Sir Hugh's Propofal of a Mediation, and the Match betwixt Mr. Slender and Mrs. Anne Page. This brings Mr. Page and Sir John out of Mr. Page's House, where the Motion is made, and approv'd, and all invited in to Dinner, where all the principal Characters of both Walks are brought acquainted with each other. The comical Duel is likewise to effect the Plot; for Sir Hugh tend to the Doctor's House-keeper to assist his Friend Slender in his Amour, she being intimately ac-

quainted
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quainted with Mother and Daughter. This Messenger is intercepted by the Doctor, on which he sends the Priest a Challenge; which produces the comical Scene of both their Passions, and Preparations for Fighting. In short, the least Incident of the Play, except Mrs. Page's and her Son's Confabulation with Sir Hugh his Master, cannot well be left out, without leaving a Gap in the Plot, and Connection of the Play.

I confess, that the Unities of Time, Place, and Action are not exactly observ'd according to the Rule and Practice of the Antients; yet as they are now manag'd among us, they may well pass. The Time is not above two Days and an half at most, the Place Windsor, and the adjacent Fields and Places. The Action is visibly double, but so it is in all the Comedies of Terence.

The first Act shows all the principal Characters except the two Fords, prepares all the Business of the Play, and enters a little into the Action, in the two Letters sent by Sir John, and the Match propos'd by Sir Hugh, and the Doctor's Challenge to the Welsh Levite. So that it is an exact Prolog or Prologue. The Episoe begins with the second Act, and carries all on to the fifth; where the Exode is in the Discovery and Punishment of the old Letcher, and the Disappointment of a forc'd Match, in Fenton's marrying Mrs. Anne Page. Mrs. Ford's Resentment of Sir John's Letter, puts her and Mrs. Page on the Revenge of the Affront, and that Revenge furnishes the Intrigue or Episodical Turns of the Play.

The Information of Pistol and Nim prepares and roues Ford's Jealousy admirably, and with a great deal of Art and Nature. Nor can any thing be more ridiculous and entertaining than the Scenes betwixt Ford, under the name of Broom, and Sir John.

Upon the whole, I think it is pretty plain, that nothing can be more agreeable to Aristotle's Definition of Comedy; for he says 'tis an Imitation of the worst sort, and that in Ridicule: it having thus all the Parts both of Quality and Quantity.

But
But to make the Parts of Quality more plain, it would be necessary to speak of the Humours; yet that would be too tedious as well as unnecessary, being so many and yet so various, and so plainly distinguished from each other, that there is no need to point out Particulars. I shall only give you what Mr. Dryden says of the Character of Falstaff, in his Essay on Dramatick Poetry —— Falstaff is the best of Comic Characters —— there are (says he) many Men resembling him —— old, fat, merry, cowardly, drunken, amorous, vain and lying. And the Duke of Buckingham confirms it in this Verse.

But Falstaff seems inimitable yet.

Ford's is an excellent Character of a politic, cautious, jealous Coxcomb; and all his Endeavours at the cautious and cunning management of the Discovery of his Doubts and Fears, involve him the more, and make him the more ridiculous: for the Conferences he has with Sir John, confirm him in his Suspicions, and his Disappointments expose his Folly.

The Fairies, in the fifth Act, make a handsom Compliment to the Queen in her Palace of Windsor, who had oblig'd him to write a Play of Sir John Falstaff in Love, and which I am very well affur'd he perform'd in a Fortnight; a prodigious thing, when all is so well contriv'd, and carry'd on without the least Confusion.

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The Argument of Measure for Measure.

VINCENTIO, Duke of Vienna, pretending to go a private Journey, leaves a severe Lord of his Court, call'd Angelo, his Deputy, to govern in his Absence, that he might not have the Odium of reviving some sanguinary Laws, which had for some time lain dormant, and for other Reasons: Escalus is left with him as a Counsellor, and next under Angelo in Authority.
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rity. The Duke being gone, Angelo begins to revive those Laws; and Claudio, a young Gentleman, is taken up to make the first Example of one of them, which made it Death for any Man to lie with a Woman out of Marriage. Claudio got Juliet with Child, whom he lov'd and design'd to marry. Angelo being inexorable, Isabella, Claudio's Sister, just going to be profess'd a Nun, goes to beg her Brother's Life; and wins the Heart of Angelo so far, that he tempts her to redeem her Brother's Life by yielding to his Embraces, vowing that no other Terms should save him; which she telling her Brother, the Duke (who goes not to travel, as he pretended, but is disguis'd in a Friar's Habit, and observes all things unknown) overhears it, and persuades her to pretend to yield to him, and appoint such a Time in the Night, that Mariana his contracted Wife, whom he had reject'd on the loss of her Fortune, might go in her Place. This being done, Angelo sends Orders to have Claudio's Head brought to him by four in the Morning. The Duke manages it so with the Provost, that the Head of one dying that Night in the Prison, and who was not unlike Claudio, should be carry'd to him; and then ordering Mariana and Isabella to complain to the Duke on his Return, which would be that Morning, he sends the Deputies word of his Return, and orders them to meet him at the City-Gates, there to give up his Authority. The Ladies make their Complaints, and after some Difficulties the Duke discovers his Knowledge of the whole matter; commands Angelo to marry Mariana immediately, and then to be beheaded, as Claudio was: But upon the Intercession of the new Wife and Isabella, and the Discovery that Claudio was preserv'd alive, Angelo is pardon'd, and has no other Punishment, than a Wife and the publick Disgrace.

There are some little under Characters in this Play, which are produc'd naturally enough by the Severity of the new Law, as that of the Bawd and the Pimp; as well as of Lucio, which Character is admirably maintain'd, as Shakespeare does every where his Comick Characters, whatever he does his Tragic.
Remarks on the

The Unities of Action and Place are pretty well observed in this Play, especially as they are in the modern Acceptation. The Design of the Play carries an excellent Moral, and a just Satire against our present Reformers; who would alter the Course of Nature, and bring us to a Perfection Mankind never knew, since the World was half peopled. But whilst they are so very severe against the Frailties of Men, they never think of their Villanies, Oppression, Extortion, Cheating, Hypocrisy, and the like, which are the Vices of Devils, not of Men: nay, which is extremely merry, many of the forefay Character, are zealous Reformers; which proves thus much at least, that the Kingdom of Hell cannot stand long, when it is so divided in itself. But to return to this Play.

The Scene betwixt Isabella and Angelo, in the second Act, is very fine; and the not bringing the yielding of Isabella to Angelo on the Stage, is artfully manag’d: for it would have been a difficult matter to have contriv’d it so, that it should not have given a flur to her Modesty in regard to the Audience, tho they knew it dissembled.

Allowing for some Peccadillo’s, the last Act is wonderful, and moving to such a degree, that he must have very little Sense of Things and Nature, who finds himself calm in the reading it.

The main Story or Fable of the Play is truly Tragical; for it is adapted to move Terror and Compassion, and the Action is one. Its having a fortunate Catastrophe, is nothing to the purpose, for that is in many of the Greek Tragedies; tho Aristotle indeed makes the unfortunate Ending the most beautiful and perfect. Leaving therefore a farther Examen of the Fable, Conduct, &c. to the Reader, and the Rules which I have laid down; I shall proceed to the finer moral Reflections and Topics of it. But it contains so many Beauties of this kind, that to transcribe them all, I should leave very little untouch’d: I shall therefore content my self to give a Sample of them.
Plays of Shakespeare.

Mercy.

Isa. ——— Well, believe this,
No Ceremony that to Great ones longs,
Not the King’s Court, nor the deputed Sword,
The Marshal’s Truncheon, or the Judge’s Robe,
Become them with one half so good a Grace
As Mercy does ———

Great Mens abuse of Power.

Isa. ——— Could Great Men thunder
As Jove himself does, Jove would never be quiet;
For every pelting petty Officer
Would use his Heaven for Thunder;
Nothing but Thunder. Merciful Heaven!
Thou rather with thy sharp and sulphurous Bolts
Splitst the unwedgable and gnarled Oak,
Than the soft Myrtle. O but Man! proud Man!
Drest in a little brief Authority;
Most ignorant of what he’s most assured,
(His glassy Essence;) like an angry Ape,
Plays such fantastick Tricks before high Heav’n,
As makes the Angels weep ———

The Privilege of Authority.

Isa. Great Men may jett with Saints; ’tis Wit in them,
But in the Lefs, foul Profanation ———
That in the Captain’s but a cholerick Word,
Which in the Soldiers is flat Blasphemy.

Ang. Why do you put those Sayings upon me?

Isa. Because Authority, tho it err like others,
Hath yet a kind of Medicine in it itself,
That skins the Vice o’th’ top ———

Angelo’s last Speech in the second Scene of the second
Act, is very beautiful, in the Agitations of Angelo’s Soul
on his falling in love with Isabella, and the Simile very
fine, which only I shall transcribe.

What’s this, what’s this? Is this her fault, or mine?
The Tempter or the Tempted, who sins most? ha!
Not she, nor doth she tempt, but it is I,

P 2

That
That lying by the Violet in the Sun,
Do as the Carrion does, not as the Flower,
Corrupt with virtuous Season——

The rest of the Speech is well worth noting; nor is
Angelo’s Speech in the fourth Scene of the same Act less
agreeable, or the following Simile in it less beautiful:

——The State, whereon I study’d,
Is like a good thing being often read,
Grown fear’d and tedious——

On Place and Form.

—— O ! Place! O! Form!
How often dost thou with thy Case, thy Habit,
Wrench Awe from Fools, and tie the wiser Souls
To this false seeming?

I cannot omit the charming Simile in the same Scene:

So play the foolish Throngs with one that swoons;
All come to help him, and so stop the Air
By which he should revive: and even so
The general Subjects to a well-wish’d King
Quit their own Part, and in obsequious Fondness
Croud to his Presence, where their untaught Love
Must needs appear Offence.

On Life.

Duke.——Reason thus with Life:——
If I do lose thee, I do lose a thing
That none but Fools would keep. A Breath thou art
Servile, to all the skiey Influences;
That dost this Habitation where thou keep’st
Hourly afflict. Merely thou art Death’s Fool:
For him thou labour’st by thy Flight to shun,
And yet run’st towards him still. Thou art not noble,
For all th’ Accommodations that thou bear’st
Are nurs’d by Baseness. Thou art by no means valiant;
For thou dost fear the soft and tender Fork

Of
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Of a poor Worm. Thy best of Rest is Sleep, And that thou oft provok'lt; yet grossly fear’lt Thy Death, which is no more. Thou art not thy self; For thou exist's on many thousand Grains, That issue out of Duff. Happy thou art not; For what thou hast not, still thou striv'lt to get, And what thou hast, forget'lt. Thou art not certain; For thy Complexion shifts to strange Effects After the Moon. If thou'rt rich, thou'rt poor; For like an Ass, whose Back with Ingots bows, Thou bear'lt thy heavy Riches but a Journey, And Death unloads thee. Friend hast thou none; For thy own Bowels, which do call thee Sire, The mere Effusion of thy proper Loin's, Do curse the Gout, Sarpigo, and the Rheum, For ending thee no sooner. Thou hast not Youth nor Age,

But as it were an after-dinner's Sleep, Dreaming on both. For all thy blessed Youth Becomes as Aged, and doth beg the Aims. Of palsy'd Eld: And when thou'rt old and rich, Thou'lt neither Heat, Affection, Limb, nor Beauty, To make thy Riches pleasant. What yet is this, That bears the Name of Life? Yet in this Life Lie hid more thousand Deaths. Yet Death we fear, That makes these Odds all Even.

It were to be wish'd, that the Pulpit could declaim in this pathetick manner, then we might perhaps have fewer Hypocrites and Usurers.

Death.

Claud. Death is a fearful thing. 

Iza. And shamed Life as hateful.

Claud. Ay, but to die, and go we not where, To lie in cold Obstruction, and to rot! This sensible warm Motion to become A kneaded Clod; and the delighted Spirit To bathe in fiery Floods, or to reside In thrilling Regions of thick ribbed Ice; To be imprison'd in the viewless Winds.
And blown with restless Violence round about
The pendent World! Or to be worse than worst
Of those, that lawless and uncertain Thought
Imagine, howling! 'Tis too horrible!
The weariest and most loathed worldly Life;
That Age, Ache, Penury, and Imprisonment
Can lay on Nature, is a Paradise
To what we fear of Death.

No shunning Slander.
No Might nor Greatness in Mortality
Can Censure 'scape. Back-wounding Calumny
The whitef Virtue strikes: What thing so strong,
Can tie the Gall up in the slanderous Tongue?

Place and Greatness.
O! Place and Greatness! Millions of false Eyes
Are stuck upon thee: Volumes of Report
Run with these false and most contrarious Quests
Upon thy Doings. Thousand Escapes of Wit,
Make thee the Father of an idle Dream,
And rack thee in their Fancies

The Plot of this Play is taken from Cynthia Giraldi,
Day 8. Novel 5. You may also look into Lipsii Monita,

The Fable or Argument of The Comedy of Errors.

A Merchant of Syracuse going to Epidamnum to take
care of his Affairs, left in disorder by his Factor's
Death; his Wife big with Child comes after him, and is
brought to bed of Twins so like, that they could not
be known from one another. And in the same Inn
were, at the same time, two Boys born to a poor Wo-
man, as much alike as the Merchant's Sons; who there-
fore buys them of the Mother, to be brought up with
and to wait upon his Sons. When returning home
from.
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from Epidamnum, a Storm arose, and the Sailors having left the Ship, he and his Wife and Children were left there, and cast away: The Wife and one Son and his Slave were taken up by the Fishermen of Corinth, and he and his younger Son and his Slave by another Vessel. And when his Son was grown up to Eighteen, he got his Consent to go seek his Brother, and with him went his Slave, and in their Travel they came to Ephesus; whither, after five Years Search, the Father likewise is arriv’d, and seiz’d, and to be put to death for entring that Port contrary to a Law, that made it Death for any Syracusan to come to Ephesus. They being thus all come to the same Town, the Play begins with Ægeon’s Account of all that is gone before; on which, the Duke of Ephesus gives him that day to raise a thousand Ducats to redeem his Life. The two Sons, named both Antipholis, and their two Slaves, both call’d Dromio, by their Likeness cause various Errors; being taken by the very Wife and Mistress and Acquaintance of that Antipholis who liv’d at Ephesus, for one another: Till the Wife taking his Man and him to be mad, has them seiz’d and bound by a Doctor to cure them. But while they think them secure, the other Brother and his Man come in with their Swords drawn; and they all fly away, wondering how he got loose, taking him for her Husband. But rallying, the other Brother and his Man fly for’t into an Abbey, and are there protected by the Abbess. The Duke coming to see Ægeon beheaded by the Abbey, Adriana the Wife of one of the Brothers applies to him, and complains of the Abbess. In the mean while, the Husband Antipholis getting loose, with his Man, comes in and complains to the Duke of his Wife’s Treatment of him. This produces the Abbess, and with her the other Antipholis: the whole Company being surpriz’d, the Discovery is made, and these found to be Brothers, and Ægeon their Father, and the Abbess Emilia their Mother; which ends the Play.

This Play is exactly regular, as any one may see, who will examine it by the Rules. The Place is part of one Town, the Time within the artificial Day, and the Action the finding the lost Brother. &c. Allowing for the

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Puns,
REMARKS on the

Puns, which were the Vice of the Age he liv'd in, it is extremely diverting: the Incidents are wonderfully pleasant, and the Catastrophe very happy and strongly moving. I have wonder'd that Mr. Dryden chose rather Amphitrion than this; because the Probability of that depending entirely on the Pagan System, strains even Credulity to render it agreeable. But this Likeness between the Twins, is what has happen'd many times; and there is, or was lately, a living Instance of it in two Brothers, Twins too, so very like, that they were perpetually mistaken for each other; and such a Sympathy between them, that when one was ill, the other sick'n'd. One was of the Band of the Musick, that belong'd to Drury-Lane Play-house; the other, if I mistake not, a Dancing-Master in the Country.

This Comedy is an undeniable Proof, that Shakespeare was not so ignorant of the Latin Tongue as some would fain make him. There is (says the Writer of his Life) one Play of his indeed, The Comedy of Errors, in great measure taken from the Menæchmi of Plautus. How that happen'd, I cannot easily divine; since, as I hinted before, I do not take him to have been Master of Latin enough to read it in the Original: and I know of no Translation of Plautus so old as his Time.

I confess, with submission to the Writer of his Life, that I can find no such need of Divination on this head; for as it is beyond contradiction plain, that this Comedy is taken from that of Plautus, so I think it as obvious to conclude from that, that Shakespeare did understand Latin enough to read him, and knew so much of him, as to be able to form a Design out of that of the Roman Poet; and which he has improv'd very much, in my Opinion. He has made two Servants as like as their Masters, who are not in Plautus. And the very Character of Adriana is copy'd from the Wife of Menæchmus Surræptus, as is visible from his first Entrance on the Stage in the second Scene of the first Act. For this is the Character he gives of her:

Ni
Plays of Shakespeare

Ni mala, ni stulta, ni indomita, imposq; Animi,
Quod vire esse odio vides, tute tibi odio habeas.
Prater hac se mibi tale post hunc Diem
Faxis, faxo foris Vidae visas Pastrem.
Nam quotas foras ire volo, me retines, revocas;
Rogitas quo ego eam? Quam rem agam? Quid Negotis:
geram?

How far Shakespeare was beholden to Plautus, may
in some measure be seen by the Argument of the Me-
nehmi.

'A Sicilian Merchant had twin Boys so like, that
they could not be distinguish'd; but one of them be-
ing stoln away, the Father died with Grief; and his
Uncle gives the Boy that remain'd the Name of his
Brother, Menachmus, his before being Sosicles; who
being grown up to be a Man, goes in search of his
Brother all round the Coasts of the Mediterranean,
Archipelago, &c. and comes at last to Epidamnum;
where his stolen Brother was seeld and marry'd to a
termagant sort of a Lady, before describ'd. When
Sosicles arriv'd, every one took him for his Brother;
his Mistrefs, Friends, his Wife, and his Father-in-Law;
till at last meeting together, they discover themselves
to be Brothers; which ends the Play.'

But this Controversy of Shakespeare's total Ignorance
of the Latin, will be no longer on foot, when we
come to his Poems; where there are several Transla-
tions of Ovid's Metamorphosis and his Epistles. This
Play, tho so full of Action, is not without beautiful Re-
fections and Speeches.

Adr. Ay, ay, Antipholis, look strange and frown;
Some other Mistrefs has some sweet Aspects.
I am not Adriana, nor thy Wife!
The time was once, when thou unurg'd would'st vow-
That never Words were Musick to thine Ear;
That never Object pleasing in thine Eye;
That never Touch was welcome to thy Hand;

That
That never Meat sweet favour'd to thy Taste;
Unless I spake, or look'd, or touch'd, or cary'd to thee.

The Superiority of Man.

Luc. There's nothing situate under Heav'n's Eye,
But has his bound in Earth, in Sea, or Sky.
The Beasts, the Fishes, and the winged Fowls,
Are their Males Subjects, and at their Controul.
Men, more Divine, the Masters of all these,
Lords of the wide World, and wide watry Seas,
Indu'd with intellectual Sense and Soul
Of more Preheminence than Fish or Fowl;
Are Masters of their Females, and their Lords:
Then let your Will attend on their Accords.

Slander.

For Slander lives upon Succession,
For ever hous'd, where once it gets possession.

The Argument of Much ado about Nothing.

The Scene lies at Messina in Sicily, and in and near
the House of Leonato. Don Pedro of Arragon, with
his Favourite Claudio, and Benedict a gay young Cavalier
of Padua, and Don John the Bastard Brother of Don Pedro,
come to Leonato's, the Governor of Messina. Claudio
is in love with Hero, Leonato's Daughter, whom Don Pedro
obtains for him; and while they wait the Wedding-Day, they consult how to make Benedict, and Beatrice
the Niece of Leonato, in love with each other; both being gay and easy, and averse to Love, and like great Talkers railing always at each other. However, by letting them overhear their Discourse, they persuade them that they are in love with each other. In the mean time, Don John, the very Soul of Envy and Mischief, contrives
how to break the Match betwixt Claudio and Hero; and to
this purpose, by his Engines Conrade and Borachio, they
make-
make Claudio and the Prince believe that Hero is a Wanton, and put a plausible Cheat on them to confirm the Suspicion, by having Borachio talk to Hero's Maid Margaret at the Chamber-Window at Midnight, as if she were Hero. Convinc'd by this Fallacy, Claudio and Don Pedro disgrace her in the Church where he went to marry her; rejecting her, and accusing her of Wantonness with another. Hero swoons away, and the Priest interposing and joining in the Attestation she makes of her Virtue, she is privately convey'd away, and reported dead. The Rogue Borachio being taken by the Watch, as he was telling the Adventure to his comrade, discovers the Villany, and clears Hero; but Don John is fled. Her Innocence being known, her Father is satisfy'd with Claudio, that he hang Verkes on her Tomb that Night, and marry a Niece of his the next Morning without seeing her Face, which he agrees to and performs, and then it is discover'd, that it is Hero, whom he marry'd: and so the Play ends, with an Account of Don John's being taken.

This Fable is as full of Absurdities, as the Writing is full of Beauties: The first I leave to the Reader to find out by the Rules I have laid down; the second I shall endeavour to shew, and point out some few of the many that are contain'd in the Play. Shakespeare indeed had the misfortune, which other of our Poets have since had, of laying his Scene in a warm Climate, where the Manners of the People are very different from ours; and yet has made them talk and act generally like Men of a colder Country: Marriage Alasmode has the same fault.

This Play we must call a Comedy; tho' some of the Incidents, and Discourses too, are more in a Tragicke Strain: and that of the Accusation of Hero is too shocking for either Tragedy or Comedy; nor could it have come off in Nature, if we regard the Country, without the Death of more than Hero. The Imposition on the Prince and Claudio seems very lame, and Claudio's Conduct to the Woman he lov'd, highly contrary to the very Nature of Love, to expose her in so barbarous a manner and with so little Concern and Struggle, and on such weak Grounds, without a farther Examination into the matter; yet the Passions this produces in the old Father, make a wonder-
wonderful amends for the Fault. Besides which, there is such a pleasing Variety of Characters in the Play, and those perfectly maintain'd, as well as distinguish'd, that you lose the Absurdities of the Conduct in the Excellence of the Manners, Sentiments, Diction and Topicks. Benedict and Beatrice are two sprightly, witty, talkative Characters; and tho of the same nature, yet perfectly distinguish'd; and you have no need to read the Names, to know who speaks. As they differ from each other, tho so near of kin, so do they from that of Lucio in Measure for Measure, who is likewise a very talkative Person: but there is a grofs Abuviness, Calumny, Lying, and Lewdness in Lucio, which Benedict is free from. One is a Rake's Mirth, and Tattle; the other that of a Gentleman, and a Man of Spirit and Wit.

The Stratagem of the Prince on Benedict and Beatrice, is manag'd with that Nicety and address, that we are very well pleas'd with the Success, and think it very reasonable and just.

The Character of Don John the Bastard is admirably distinguish'd, his Manners are well mark'd, and every where convenient or agreeable. Being of a sord, melancholy, saturnine, envious, selfish, malicious Temper, Manners Necessary to produce the villainous Events they did; these were productive of the Catatrophe: for he was not a Person brought in to fill up the Number only, because without him the Fable could not have gone on.

To quote all the Comick Excellencies of this Play, would be to transcribe three parts of it. For all that passes betwixt Benedict and Beatrice, is admirable. His Discourse against Love and Marriage, in the latter end of the second Act, is very pleasant and witty; as is that which Beatrice says of Wooing, Wedding, and Repenting. And the Aversion that the Poet gives Benedict and Beatrice to each other in their Discourse, heightens the Jest of making them in love with one another. Nay, the Variety and natural Distinction of the vulgar Humours of this Play, are remarkable.

The Scenes of this Play are something obscure; for you can scarce tell where the Place is in the two first Acts, tho' the Scenes in them seem pretty entire and unbroken.
broken. But those are things we ought not to look much for in Shakespeare. Yet whilst he is out in the Dramatick Imitation of the Fable, he always draws Men and Women so perfectly, that when we read, we can scarce persuade our selves, but that the Discourse is real, and no Fiction.

On Friendship in Love.
Friendship is constant in all other things,
Save in the Office and Affairs of Love;
Therefore all Hearts in Love use their own Tongues.
Let every Eye negotiate for it self,
And trust no Agent: For Beauty is a Witch,
Against whose Charms, Faith melteth into Blood.

Patience under Misfortunes, easier advis'd than maintain'd.

Leonat. I pray thee cease thy Counsel,
Which falls into my Ears, as proflifes,
As Water in a Sieve. Give not me Counsel,
Nor let no Comfort else delight mine Ear,
But such an one, whose Wrongs do suit with mine.
Bring me a Father that so lov'd his Child,
Whose Joy of her is overwhelm'd like mine,
And bid him speak of Patience;
Measure his Woe the Length and Breadth of mine,
And let it answer every Strain for Strain;
As thus for thus, and such a Grief for such,
In every Lineament, Branch, Shape, and Form:
If such an one will smile, and stroke his Beard,
And holla! wag, cry hem! when he should groan;
Patch Grief with Proverbs; make Misfortunes drunk
With Candle-Wafters: bring him yet to me,
And I of him will gather Patience.
But there is no such Man: For, Brother, Men
Can counsel, and speak Comfort to that Grief
Which they themselves not feel; but tasting it,
Their Counsel turns to Passion, which before
Would give preceptual Medicine to Rage;
Fetter strong Madnes in a silken Thread;
Charm Ache with Air, and Agony with Words.

No,
REMARKS on the
No, no, 'tis all Mens Office to speak Patience
To those that wring under the Load of Sorrow;
But no Man has Virtue nor Sufficiency
To be so moral, when he shall endure
The like himself. Therefore give me no Counsel—
My Grieves cry louder than Advertisement.

I have given more than the bare Topic, because the
Speech is pathetick, and extremely natural. Nor can I
omit another Speech, tho' it contain neither Topic nor
Description.

If they wrong her Honour,
The proudest of them all shall hear of it.
Time has not yet so dry'd this Blood of mine;
Nor Age so eat up my Invention;
Nor Fortune made such havock of my Means;
Nor my bad Life rett me so much of Friends;
But they shall find, awak'd in such a kind,
Both Strength of Limb, and Policy of Mind,
Ability in Mears, and Choice of Friends;
To quit me of them thorouly.

Of this I shall speak in my Remarks on his Verses;
where he has more than once made use of the same Figure.
For the Plot of this Play, consult Ariosto's Orlando Furioso,
Book 5. and Spenser's Fairy Queen, Book 2.

The Argument of Love's Labour lost.

The King of Navarre and some of his Nobles
make a Vow of retiring from the World to their
Books for three Years, and forswear the Conversation
of all Women. But the King of France's Daughter,
and some Ladies her Attendants, come in an Embassy
from her Father to the King of Navarre; which obliges
them to a Conversation with the Ladies, and that makes
them all in love, and endeavour, after they have found
out each other's Frailty and Breach of Oath, to win the
Ladies to yield to love them. But they admit them to
hope, on condition they remain in the same mind a
Year, and perform certain Penances. This, and the
News of the French King's Death, ends the Play.

Tho I can't well see why the Author gave this Play
this Name, yet since it has past thus long, I shall say
no more to it but this; That since it is one of the
worst of Shakespeare's Plays, nay, I think I may say, the
very worst, I cannot but think that it is his first, not-
withstanding those Arguments, or that Opinion, which
has been brought to the contrary. 'Perhaps (says the
Author of his Life) we are not to look for his Begin-
nings, like those of other Authors, among their least
perfect Writings. Art had so little, and Nature so
large a share in what he did; that for ought I know,
the Performances of his Youth, as they were the most
vigorous, and had the most Fire of Imagination in
them, were the best. I would not be thought by this
to mean, that his Fancy was so loose and extravagant,
as to be independent of the Rule and Government
of Judgment; but that what he thought was com-
monly so great, so justly and rightly concerted in it self,
that it wanted little or no Correction, and was imme-
diately approv'd by an impartial Judgment at first sight.

But since this Gentleman has only given us a Supposi-
tion of his own, without confirming it with any con-
vincing, or indeed probable Reason; I hope I may be
permitted to throw in another Perhaps for the Opinion
of Mr. Dryden and others, without offending him by
the Opposition. I agree with him, that we have in-
deed in our Days seen a young Man start up like a
Mushroom in a Night, and surprize the Whim of the
Town into a momentary Reputation; or at
least by a surprizing first Play, (as Plays go at this
time) and in all his After-Trials, give us not one
Line that might supply our Credulity with the least
Reason to believe that he wrote the first himself.
Thus Love's last Shift was an excellent first Play, and
yet that Author, after so many Trials, has not only ne-
ever come up to his first Effay, but scarce to any thing
tolerable;
tollerable, except in one, that like a Oeder Cheese was
made by the Milk of a Parish.
But in Shakespeare we are not considering those Masters
of the Stage, that glare a little in the Night, but disap-
ppear in the Day; but fix'd Stars, that always show their
unborrow'd Light. And here the common Experience
is directly against our Author; for all the Poets, that
have without Controversy been Masters of a great Genius,
have rose to Excellence by Degrees. The Wild Gallans
was the worst of Dryden's Plays, and the first; and the
Plain Dealer was the last of Mr. Wycherly's. Otway,
the brightest and most tragick Genius of our World, gave
us three moderate Plays before the Orphan and Venice
Preserv'd. And why we should think that Shakespeare
should grow worse by Practice, I can find no shadow of
a Reason from what is advanc'd. But—the Perform-
ances of his Youth, as they were the most vigorous, and
had the most Fire and Strength of Imagination in them,
were the best. But still this is begging the Question,
and taking that for granted, which wants to be prov'd,
viz. that the Productions of his Youth had the most
Fire and Strength of Imagination. The last Works of
Mr. Dryden, tho past Seventy, had much the most Fire
and Strength of Imagination; his Fables excelling all that
he ever wrote before. Nor can we think but that
Shakespeare was far from Dotage, when he died at fifty
three, and had retir'd some Years from the Stage, and
left off writing Plays. But should we allow what our
Author contends for, his Supposition would not hold;
for the Play before us, and all his most imperfect Plays,
have the least Fire and Strength of Imagination; and
that Fancy which is in them, is almost every where in-
dependent of that Rule of Judgment, which our Author
supposes him Master of. I am sure Judgment increases
with Years and Observation; and where Shakespeare
shews that he is least extravagant, 'tis plain he depends
most on that Rule of Judgment. I confess the Terms
are something obscure, and equivocal; but I pretend
not to enter into a Debate with him on this Head: all
I have said being to justify Mr. Dryden and some others,
who yet think that we ought to look into Shakespeare's
most
most imperfect Plays for his first. And this of Love's Labour Lost being perhaps the most defective, I can see no reason why we should not conclude, that it is one of his first. For neither the Manners, Sentiments, Diction, Versification, &c. (except in some few Places) discover the Genius that shines in his other Plays.

But tho this Play be so bad, yet there is here and there a Stroke, that persuades us that Shakespeare wrote it. The Proclamation, that Women should lose their Tongues, if they approach'd within a Mile of the Court, is a pleasant Penalty. There are but few words spoken by Jaquenetta in the latter end of the first Act, and yet the very Soul of a pert Country Lass is perfectly express'd. The several Characters of the King's Companions in the Retreat, are very pretty, and the Remarks of the Princess very just and fine. Longavile's good Epigram furnishes a Proof, that these publish'd in this Volume are genuine, and for that reason I will transcribe it.

Did not the Heavenly Rhetorick of thine Eye,
'Gainst whom the World cannot hold Argument,
Persuade my Heart to this false Perjury?
Vows for thee broke deserve not Punishment.
A Woman I forswore, but I will prove,
Thou being a Goddess, I forswore not thee.
My Vow was earthly, thou a heavenly Love;
Thy Grace being gain'd cures all Disgrace in me.
Vows are but Breath, and Breath a Vapour is:
When thou, fair Sun, which on my Earth dost shine,
Exhal'st this Vapour-Vow, in thee it is:
If broken, then it is no fault of mine,
If by me broke; what Fool is not so wise
To lose an Oath, to win a Paradise?

The Discovery of the King's, Longavile's, and Du- main's Love, is very prettily manag'd; and that of Biron, by Costard's Mistake, is a well-contriv'd Incident. The whole indeed is a tolerable Proof, how much in vain we resolve against Nature; nor is Biron's Casualty amiss,
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amiss, when he strives to salve their common Breach of
Oath.

Of Delights.

Biron. Why all Delights are vain, and that most vain,
Which with Pain purchased does inherit Pain, &c.

On Study.

Study is like the Heaven's glorious Sun,
That will not be deep search'd with saucy Looks;
Small have continual Plodders ever won,
Save base Authority from other Books, &c.

Beauty.

Beauty is bought by Judgment of the Eye,
Not utter'd by base Sale of Chapmen's Tongues, &c.

A pleasant Description of Cupid, or Love.
This whimpelled, whining, purblind wayward, Boy,
This Signior Junio's Giant-Dwarf, Don Cupid,
Regent of Love-Rhimes, Lord of folded Arms,
The anointed Sovereign of Sighs and Groans;
Liese of all Loiterers and Malecontents;
Dread Prince of Plackets, King of Codpusses, &c.

Of a Wife.

I seek a Wife;
A Woman that is like a German Clock,
Still a repairing, ever out of Frame, &c.

There is a pretty Account of Love, beginning,

But Love first learned in a Lady's Eye, &c.

And on Womens Eyes there are some pretty Reflections, beginning thus;

From Womens Eyes this Doctrine I derive,
They sparkle still the true Prometheus Fire, &c.

The
The Argument of Midsummer Night's Dream.

Theseus having brought Hippolita from the Amazons, designs to marry her in a few days. Whilst he is appointing the Time, Theseus, one of his Courtiers, complains of his Daughter Hermia's Love to Lysander, and Aversion to Demetrius, for whom he design'd her, tho' Demetrius had been in Love with Helena, and was contrasted to her. Hermia refuses to comply with her Father; the Duke allows her four Days to consider of it, in which time she must, by the Athenian Law, either obey, be put to Death, or vow perpetual Chastity on the Altar of Diana. This makes Lysander persuade Hermia that Night to fly with him from Athens, to an Aunt of his, out of the Jurisdiction of that City, and there marry him. She contents, and informs Helena, her intimate Friend, of her Design; and wishes Demetrius may, on her Flight, return to his Duty. Helena, out of Dotage on her Lover, informs him of Hermia's Flight, who goes after her, and she after him, and so they all meet at a Wood a little from Athens, where they become liable to the power of the Fairies. For Oberon and his Queen Titania being come to dance in the Palace of Theseus, to give a Blessing to his Wedding, quarrel about a Change-ling-Boy that the Queen had stolen, and which she lov'd, to the raising the Jealousy of Oberon, denying to give him to her Husband. In revenge, Oberon sending Puck for a Charm, lays it on the Queen, when asleep, to make her fall in Love with whatever she saw when the wak'd. Puck, in the mean while, is sent to put some on the Eyes of Demetrius, so that he may fall in Love with Helena, whom Oberon had seen him treat very ungratefully, and making no return for her Love; but Puck mistaking the Man, Oberon having bid him do it to one in an Athenian Habit, puts it on Lysander's Eyes, which makes him in Love with Helena, and use Hermia very unkindly: But Oberon finding the Mistake, charms Demetrius so, that
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that he likewise loves Helena. This produces a Quarrel; but the Rivals are hinder'd from fighting, by Puck's Artifice. Then the Lovers, being all asleep, and restored to rights, Oberon puts an end to the Charm that held his Queen enamour'd of a Clown, whose Head was turn'd into that of an Ass, she having then given Oberon the Boy he had before begg'd in vain. They being so reconcil'd, appoint to dance the next Night in Duke Theseus's Palace. The Morning being come, Theseus, Hippolita, Egeus, &c. come into the same Wood to hunt, and find the four Lovers asleep by one another; they being waken'd by the Horns, and avowing their Loves to one another, as they should, Demetrius resigns Hermia to Lysander, and takes his former Love Helena; so being marry'd all at the same time with Theseus, Bottom and his Companions present a strange sort of a Play of Pyramus and Thisbe, which ends our Play.

Great part of this Play depending on a sort of Notion of Fairies and their Power, it falls not under the Consideration of others, whose Actors are all human. Of the nature of these things I have already spoken, in my Notes on the Tempest. It is plain from the Argument, that the Fable can never bear the Test of the Rules. The time is by Theseus, in the first Scenes of the Play, fix'd to at least four days, in these words:

Now, fair Hippolita, our Nuptial Hour
Draws on apace, four happy Days bring in
Another Moon, &c.

The New Moon being the time for their Marriage. But it does not appear that there is any more time spent in the Action than one Day and one Night, and a piece of a Day, and part of one Night.

Tho' this cannot be call'd either Tragedy or Comedy, as wanting the Fable requir'd to either; yet it contains abundance of beautiful Reflections, Descriptions, Similes and Topicks. Much of it is in Rhime, in which the Author is generally very smooth and flowing. The first Scene of the Complaint of Egeus to Theseus, is very pretty; the Obstinacy of a peevish old Father, who will dispose
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dispose of his Daughter without regard to her Inclinations, is well express'd; and the manner of his representing how Lysander had robb'd her of her Affections, is extremely agreeable to that Character.

But I cannot omit Hermia's Oath, to meet her Lover that Night, and fly with him from Athens.

Her. My good Lysander;
I swear to thee by Cupid's strongest Bow;
By his best Arrow with the golden Head;
By the Simplicity of Venus' Doves;
By that which knitteth Souls, and prospers Love;
And by that Fire which burn'd the Carthage Queen,
When the false Trojan under Sail was seen;
By all the Vows that ever Men have broke,
(In Number more than ever Woman spoke);
In that same place thou hast appointed me,
To morrow truly will I meet with thee.

Tho we cannot perhaps trace the Ancients in the Thoughts of Shakespear; yet it is plain from these Verses, and several others about his Plays, that Shakespear was acquainted with the Fables of Antiquity very well. That some of the Arrows of Cupid are pointed with Lead, and the others with Gold, he found in Ovid: And that which speaks of Dido, he has from Virgil himself; nor do I know of any Translation of those Poets so antient as Shakespear's time.

Titania's Description of the Disorder of the Season, on account of the Difference betwixt her and Oberon, is very fine.

The Similes which Lysander uses to express, or rather justify his Falshood, are very fine.

For, as a Surfeit of the sweetest things
The deepest Loathing to a Stomach brings;
Or as the Heresies that Men do leave,
Are hated most of those they did deceive;
So thou my Surfeit, and my Heresy,
Of all be hated, but the most by me.

Titania's
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Titania's Order to the Fairies to honour her Love, being what Mr. Dryden has often instance'd, as one of the prettiest Flights of Fancy in Shakespear, I must not omit.

Qu. Be kind and courteous to this Gentleman; Hop in his Walks, and gambol in his Eyes; Feed him with Apricots and Dewberries, With purple Grapes, green Figs, and Mulberries: The Honey-Bags steal from the humble Bees, And for Night-Tapers crop their waxen Thighs, And light them at the fiery Glow-worm's Eyes; To have my Love to bed, and to arise: And pluck the Wings from painted Butterflies, To fan the Moon-Beams from his sleeping Eyes: Nod to him, Elves, and do him Curtseies.

Puck's Similes on the Scene of Bottom and his Companions, are very apt. Such is Demetrius's Description of Helena's Beauty, when he wakes, after charm'd by Oberon, and is worthy looking on. The Reflection of Theseus, on the Diversion offer'd by the Clowns, is just.

—— For never any thing Can be amiss, when Simpleness and Duty tender it.

His Reflections on Duty and Respect are fine: but giving an Instance or two of the Topics, we'll pass to the next Play.

True Love.
The Course of true Love never did run smooth, But either it was different in Blood—— Or else misgrafted in respect of Years, Or else it stood upon the Choice of Merit; Or if there were a Sympathy in Choice, War, Death, or Sickness did lay siege to it, Making it momentary as a Sound, Swift as a Shadow, short as any Dream, Brief as the Lightning in a collied Night, That
That in a spleen unfolds both Heaven and Earth;  
And ere a man has power to say, Behold!  
The jaws of darkness do devour it up:  
So quick bright things come to confusion!

The simile of lightning is a perfect hypotyposis;  
And the epiphonema in the last line, concludes the  
Topick beautifully:

Love.

Things base and vile, holding no quantity,  
Love can transpose to form and dignity.  
Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind;  
And therefore is wing’d Cupid painted blind.  
Nor has love’s mind of any judgment taste;  
Wings, and no eyes, figure unheedy haste.  
And therefore is love said to be a child,  
Because in choice he often is beguil’d.  
As wag’ish boys themselves in game forswear,  
So the boy love is perjur’d every where.

Whether these reflections are not too just for one in  
Helena’s condition to make, I leave to the judicious;  
But as they are here, divested of all persons, they are  
Admirable.

Night.

Dark night, that from the eye its function takes,  
The ear more quick of apprehension makes;  
Wherein it does impair the seeing sense,  
It pays the hearing double recompence.

And Puck makes a description of the night, which  
The reader may add to this.

Lovers, Poets, and Madmen fanciful.

Lovers and madmen have such seething brains,  
Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend more  
Than cold reason ever comprehends.  
The lunatick, the lover, and the poet,  
Are of imagination all compact.
One sees more Devils than vast Hell can hold,
That is the Madman. The Lover, all as frantick,
Sees Helen's Beauty in a Brow of Egypt.
The Poet's Eye, in a fine Frenzy rowling,
Doth glance from Heaven to Earth, from Earth to Heaven;
And as Imagination bodies forth the Form of things
Unknown, the Poet's Pen turns them to Shapes,
And gives to airy Nothing a local Habitation,
And a Name.

All his Fairies, Goblins, and the like, are of this kind,
which he describes here.

Imagination.
—Such Tricks has strong Imagination,
That if it would but apprehend some Joy,
It comprehends some Bringer of that Joy:
Or in the Night imagining some Fear,
How easy is a Bulb suppos'd a Bear?

The Fairy Queen was taken from this Play; but whence
Shakespeare took the Hint of it, I know not, but believe
it to be his own Invention.

The Argument of The Merchant of Venice.

Antonio, a wealthy and a generous Merchant of Venice, having a perfect Friendship for Bassanio a young Gentleman of fine Accomplishments of the same City, is bound for him to one Shylock a Jew for three thousand Ducats for three Months; to forfeit, on missing his Day of Payment, a Pound of Flesh, where the Jew would take it. Bassanio having the Money, goes to Belmont to obtain Portia, a rich and beautiful Lady, who was to be won by guessing at the Casket out of three, which held her Picture; to which end, divers Princes came from several Parts of the World, taking an Oath

not
not to reveal which Casket they chose, if they mis'éd, and to go immediately away on their Miscarriage. One Casket was of Gold, and another of Silver, and a third of Lead. The rest, misled by Show, chose all wrong; but Bassanio chusing the Lead, won the Lady to both their Satisfaction. But then Salanio, with Lorenzo, who had run away with Shylock’s Daughter, marry’d her, and made her a Christian, brings the News of Antonio’s Misfortune, that his Ships are all cast away, and his Bond forfeited to the Jew. Bassanio having inform’d Portia of the Distress of his Friend, is marry’d to her, and his Attendant Gratiano to her Maid Nerissa; and he with Salanio speeds away to Venice, to help Antonio. The Husbands are no sooner gone, but the Wives leaving the Care of the House to Lorenzo and Jessica, haste to Venice after them; where Portia, in the Habit of an Advocate or Doctor of the Civil Law, hears Antonio’s Case, and having a little held the Jew in suspense, and hope of Success to his cruel Revenge, and he having refus’d all Considerations in Money, gives the Cause to Antonio; and will not only not let the Jew have his Principal, but proves that he has forfeited his Life and Goods, which he is oblig’d to give his Daughter on his Death, or to turn Christian.

The Ignorance that Shakespeare had of the Greek Drama, threw him on such odd Stories, as the Novels and Romances of his time could afford; and which were so far from being natural, that they wanted that Probability and Verisimilitude which is absolutely necessary to all the Representations of the Stage. The Plot of this Play is of that number. But the Errors of the Fable and the Conduct are too visible to need discovery. This Play has receive’d considerable Advantages from the Pen of the present Lord Lansdown.

The Character of the Jew is very well distinguish’d by Avarice, Malice, implacable Revenge, &c. But the Incidents that necessarily shew these Qualities, are so very romantick, so vauntly out of Nature, that our Reason, our Understanding is every where shock’d; which abates extremely of the Pleasure the Pen of Shakespeare might give us. This is visible in his Speech to the Doge: for notwithstanding
withstanding that Distinction of Character which is beautiful, and otherwise pleases you, the Incredibility of such a Discourse to such a Prince, and before such a Court of Judicature, has so little of Nature in it, that it is impossible to escape the Censure of a Man of common Sense.

The Character of Portia is not everywhere well kept; that is, the Manners are not always agreeable or convenient to her Sex and Quality, particularly where she scarce preserves her Modesty in the Expression.

The Scene betwixt Shylock and Tubal, in the third Act, is artfully managed; and the Temper of the Jew excellently discovered in its various Turns upon the different News of which Tubal gives him an account.

This Play, as well as most of the rest, gives Instances that Shakespeare was perfectly acquainted with the fabulous Stories of the old Poets; which is to me a Confirmation that he was well acquainted with the Authors of the Latin Antiquity, whence only he could learn them.

Tho there are a great many Beauties in what our modern Gentlemen call the Writing in this Play, yet it is almost everywhere calm, and touches not the Soul; there are no fine new Passions, which ought everywhere to shine in a serious Dramatick Performance, such as most of this is.

You have too much Respect upon the World; They lose it, that do buy it with much Care.

Of Mediocrity.

Nero. And yet, for outh I see, they are as sick that surfeit with too much, as they that starve with nothing; therefore it is no small Happiness to be seated in the Mean: Superfluity comes sooner by white Hairs, but Competency lives longer.

Easier to advise than do.

Por. If to do, were as easy as to know what were good to do, Chapels had been Churches; and poor Mens Cottages, Princes Palaces. 'Tis a good Divine that follows his own Instructions. I can easlier teach twenty what is good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow my own teaching. The Brain may devise Laws for the Blood;
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Blood; but a hot Temper leaps o'er a cold Decree. Such a Hare is Madness, the Youth, to skip over the Meshes of good Counsel, the Cripple.

That we are more eager in the Pursuit of what we have not, than the Preservation of what we have posses'd, take his own words: 'O! ten times faster Venus' Pigeons fly, &c.' In Portia's Speech, when Bassanio is going to make his Choice, there are several beautiful Similes.

Against Appearance, for near forty Lines together. He is generally excellent in his Choice of Epithets, of a strong, proper, and natural Signification, and such as denote the Quality of the thing wonderfully; as here—

Por. How all the other Passions fleet to Air!
As doubtful Thoughts, and rash-embrac'd Despair,
And shuddring Fear, and green-ey'd Jealousy, &c.

Bassanio's Description of Portia's Picture, when he chooses the leaden Casket, is very fine. There are likewise in that or the next Page two fine Similes; the first begins thus—'Like one of two contending in a Prize:' And the other thus——'As after some Oration fairly spoke, &c.'

An Affection in Words, beginning thus:

——'O! dear Discretion! how his Words are suited, &c.

Mercy.

Por. The Quality of Mercy is not strain'd;
It droppeth as the gentle Rain from Heaven
Upon the Place beneath. It is twice bless'd;
It blesses him that gives, and him that takes.

On the Power of Musick.
The Reason is, your Spirits are attentive,
For do but note a wild and wanton Herd, &c.

The Expression is very fine on the Moonshine Night—
'This Night, methinks, is but the Day-light sick, &c.'
FREDERICK the Duke of some part of France is depos'd and banish'd by his younger Brother, and retir'd to the Forest of Arden; many People of Fashion following him thither, out of love to him, and hatred of the Usurper; who detains ROSALINDA, his Brother's Daughter, to gratify his own Daughter Celia, who doated on her with a very peculiar Love and Affection; but being afterwards jealous of her Popularity, banisheth her likewise. But his own Daughter flies with her, ROSALINDA being in Man's Clothes, under the name of Ganymede; and Celia in Woman's, under the Name of Alienè. Hither likewise comes ORLANDO, the youngest Son of Sir ROWLAND DUBOIS, fled from his elder Brother's Cruelty and the Usurper's Hate. He wrestling before the Duke, kills his Wrestler CHARLES, and wounds the Heart of ROSALINDA, as she did his. But meeting in the Forest, he makes love to her as ROSALINDA, tho' in appearance a Lad; which Habit betray'd PHABE, a Shepherdess, to fall likewise in love with her as a Man, whom she uses scurvily, to make her pity SILVIUS, the Swain that is in love with her. ORLANDO's Brother OLIVER being forc'd to fly from the Rage of the Usurper, because his Brother had made his Escape, is deliver'd from a Lioness by the Valour of ORLANDO, whose Life he had before so basely sought; but being thus reconcil'd, falls in love with CELIA, and she with him. So the Marriage being resolv'd on, ROSALINDA, or rather GANYMEDE, promises ORLANDO that he shall have his true ROSALINDA the next day, and PHABE, that she will have her, on condition that if she refuse him, she shall marry SILVIUS. Having perform'd all this, and the banish'd Duke having given her to ORLANDO; JAQUES, ORLANDO's and OLIVER's Brother, brings News that the Usurper, coming with Forces against them, was on the way converted, and gone into a Monastery, leaving the Duke-dom again to his Brother.

This Story has nothing Dramatick in it, yet Shakespear has made as good use of it as possible.
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The Scene betwixt Orlando and his Brother Oliver, in the opening of the Play, is well manag'd; discovering some things that go before in the Quarrel between them: and Oliver's Management of the provoking Charles the Wrestler against Orlando, is artful and natural.

Martial has this Distich:

Quem recitas meus est, O! Fidentine! Libellus;
Sed male dum recitas, incipit esse tuus.

I will not say that Shakespeare took the following Thought from this, but it is plainly the same: Orlando says to Jaques——'I pray thee mar no more of my Verses, by reading them ill-favour'dly.' The old Duke's Speech, preferring that Solitude to the World, is full of moral Reflections: 'Now my Co-mates, and Brothers in Exile, &c.' The third Scene of the second Act, betwixt Orlando and Adam moving by the Gratitude of the old Servant, is that fine Speech of Jaques, taken notice of by Mr. Rowe in Shakspear's Life. His Pleasantry as to the different Motion of Time, is worth remarking: and Rosalinda's Character of a Man in love, is very pretty.

On the several sorts of Melancholy.

Jaques. I have neither the Scholar's Melancholy, which is Emulation; nor the Musician's, which is fantastical; nor the Courtier's, which is proud; nor the Soldier's, which is ambitious; nor the Lawyer's, which is political; nor the Lady's, which is nice; nor the Lover's, which is all these, &c.

Love.

Ros. No, that same wicked Bastard of Venus, that was begot of Thought, conceiv'd of Spleen, and born of Madness; that blind rasally Boy, that abuses every one's Eyes, because his own are out; let him be Judge how deep I am in love.

A Courtier.

—He has been a Courtier, he swears.

Clown. If any Man doubt that, let him put me to the Purgation—I have trod a Measure; I have flatter'd a Lady; I have been politick with my Friend, smooth with my Enemy; I have undone three Taylors; I have had four Quarrels, and had like to have fought one.
The Argument of The Taming the Shrew:

A Gentleman of Padua has two Daughters, Catharine the Elder, and Biancha the Younger. The Elder is so known a Shrew, that no body would make love to her in order to Matrimony, while Biancha had many that address'd to her for that end. But the Father declared he would not dispose of the youngest, till the eldest was marry'd: which made all the Pretenders despair, till Petruchio of Verona ventur'd upon the Match, woos her madly, marries her quickly, and treats her intolerably; till he broke her Stubbornness so, that she was the most obedient of the three Wives then there, viz. her Sister, who was marry'd to Lucentio, and a Widow who just marry'd Hortensio, a Suiter of Biancha's, till his Disgust at her listening to Lucentio, who appear'd only to be a School-master.

This Play is indeed Dramatick, for it is all Action, and there is little room left for Reflections and fine Topicks. Tho it be far from Regular as to Time and Place, yet it is perfectly so in the Action; and some of the Irregularities of Time might have been prevented. In a matter of twelve Lines, there is plainly supposed at least twelve, if not twenty four Hours to have pass'd; there is scarce indeed a Line for an Hour. The Diflch of Ovid, which Lucentio construes in a pleasant way, is a fresh Proof that Shakespeare was well acquainted with Ovid: and that he had a peculiar Value for that Poet, is plain from what Tranio says in the first Scene: 'Let's be no Sticks, nor no Stocks, I pray; or so devote to Aristotle's Checks, as Ovid be an Out-cast quite abroad, &c.' The Reader, by regarding this whole Speech of Tranio, will find that Shakespeare was far from being that Ignoramus in Literature, as some would unaccountably make him.

Grumio's Account of Petruchio's Journey with his Bride, is very entertaining.
The Mind, not the Habit, valuable.
For 'tis the Mind that makes the Body rich.
And as the Sun breaks thro' the darkest Clouds,
So Honour peareth in the meanest Habit.
What, is the Jay more precious than the Lark;
Because his Feathers are more beautiful?
Or is the Adder better than the Eel,
Because the painted Skin contents the Eye, &c.

Catharine's Harangue to her Sister and the Widow,
on the Duty of Wives to their Husbands, if the Ladies
would read it with a little Regard, might be of mighty
use in this Age.

The Story of the Tinker, by which this Comedy is
introduc'd, may be found in Goulart's Histories Admira-
bles, and in Pontus Heueterus Rerum Burdicarum. The
Comedy it self is his own Invention, as far as we can
discover, and so good, that tho' it has been alter'd by
Mr. Lacy, yet I do not think it much improv'd: That
Comedian committed an odd Blunder, in laying the
Scene in England, and adding Sawny the Scor, and yet
retaining all the other Names that were purely Italian.
The additional Trial of Skill, on their Return to her
Father, is well contriv'd.

The Argument of All's well that ends well.

Helen, Daughter of Gerard de Narbonne, a famous
Physician in France, is bred up by the Countess
Dowager of Rouillon as her own. She falls in love with
Bertram the young Count; who being sent to Court,
her Passion for him is discover'd by the Dutchess, and
she encourag'd in her Attempt to cure the King of a
Fistula, when all the Doctors had given him over:
She therefore arrives at Court, and after much Impor-

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tunity cures the King; and in right of his Promise, chooses Count Bertram for her Husband: but he disdaining her for a Wife, is compell'd for fear of the King to marry her; but then he orders her to go immediately, and return to his Mother, assuring her that he would follow her. But on the contrary, he steals away privately with Perolles a Braggadocio that misled his Youth, and goes to the Wars in Tuscany; sending a Letter to his Wife by a Friend, of this import, That she should never call him Husband, till she could get the Ring from his Finger, and shew him a Child begotten by him on her Body; and that till he had no Wife, he could have nothing in France. Upon this, Helena goes away privately in a Pilgrim's Habit, and comes to Florence, meets with a Widow, whose Daughter Diana Count Bertram endeavours to debauch. Helena discovering her self to them, prevails with the Daughter to get the Ring on his Finger, in consideration of her surrendering her Maidenhead to him, and that she should supply her place in Bed at night. After this piece of Cunning, and News that Helena was dead, Count Bertram returns to France; Helena, the Widow and the Daughter follow him; and having prov'd all this before the King, the Count receives his Wife into favour, and the King forgives all that is past.

The Irregularity of the Plot is visible enough, when we are in one part of a Scene in France, in another in Italy, &c. The Story itself is out of a Possibility almost; at least so far out of the way of Custom and Experience, that it can't be call'd natural. The Character of Perolles is taken notice of by Mr. Rowe very justly, for its Excellence; being, I think, preferable to all in that kind, except his own Falstaff. He has indeed drawn Variety of COWARDS, Nim, Bardolph, Pistol, Sir Andrew Ague-Cheek, &c.

This Play is not destitute however of fine Reflections and instructive Sentences: The Speech of the Countess to her Son, on his leaving her to go to Court, is very good.
---Be thou blest, Bertram, and succeed thy Father,
In Manners as in Shape; thy Blood and Virtue
Contend for Empire in thee.

Nor can I omit Mariana's Advice to the Widow's Daughter.

Well, Diana, take heed of the French Earl,
The Honour of a Maid is in her Name,
And no Legacy is so rich as Honesty.

And a little after, thus—'Beware of them, Diana,
Their Promises, Enticements, Oaths, etc.'

Life is chequer'd.

1 L. The Web of our Life is of mingled Yarn,
good and ill together: our Virtues would be proud, if
our Faults whipt them not; and our Crimes would
despair, if they were not cherish'd by our Virtues.

A Braggadocio.

Who knows himself a Braggart,
Let him fear this; for it will come to pass,
That every Braggart shall be found an Ais.

The Plot of this Play is taken from Boccace's Novels,

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The Argument of Twelf-Night, or
What you will.

O rsino Duke of Illyria is in love with Olivia, a Lady
of great Beauty, Quality, and Fortune; but in
vain. Viola and Sebastian, Twins, are cast away at Sea,
but each by the other thought to be drown'd: Viola,
being cloth'd in one of her Brothers Suits, under the
Name-
Name of Cesario, is admitted to be Page to the Duke, with whom she is secretly in love, but by him oblig'd to go between him and his Mistress; by which, Olivia, who could not hear of any such Motion from the Duke, falls in love with the Page. Sebastian in the mean while coming to the same City, and being taken for Cesario, beats Sir Toby Belch, and Sir Andrew Ague-Cheeck; and by the same Mistake is marry'd to Olivia. The Duke and Cesario coming to Olivia, to press his Fortune the last time, he threatens Cesario's Life: she owns her Marriage, and calls him Husband; which being resent'd by the Duke, is deny'd by the Page, till Sir Andrew Ague-Cheeck comes in to complain of Sebastian, who following, proves so like, that they could not be distinguish'd: So they being discover'd to be Brother and Sister, the Duke marries Viola, and that ends the Play.

There is a sort of Under-Plot, in Sir Toby's bubbling Sir Andrew in hopes of his having Olivia, of their imposing on Olivia's Steward Malvolio, as if his Lady was in love with him, and the Quarrel promoted betwixt Cesario and Sir Andrew; which yet are so interwoven, that there is nothing so necessary to the main Plot, but that Episode of the Steward. This, as well as some others of his Comedies, has some Confusion about the chief Person; for sometimes Orsino is Duke or Sovereign of the Country, at other times he is Count Orsino; and Olivia speaks of him as of an Equal, a private Man, not a Prince. ——Thus she says to Cesario, towards the end of the Play: 'Take thy Fortunes up, and that thou know'ft thou art; and then thou art as great as that thou fear'ft.'

Malvolio, Sir Toby, and Sir Andrew, are three Characters truly Comical, that is, Ridiculous.

Love.

Duke. O! Spirit of Love, how quick and fresh art thou! That notwithstanding thy Capacity Receiveth as the Sea, nought enters there.
Of what Validity and Pitch soe'er,
But falls into Abatement and low Price,
Ev'n in a Minute: So full of Shapes is Fancy,
That it alone is high fantastical.

What the Duke says in the next Page, is very fine,
and the natural Effect of Love and Desire. The
Thought is extremely pathetick.

Duke. O! she that has a Heart of that fine Frame,
To pay a Debt of Love but to a Brother;
How will she love, when the rich golden Shaft
Has kill'd the Flock of all Affections else,
That live in her? when Liver, Brain, and Heart,
These Sovereign Thrones, are all supply'd and fill'd,
Her sweet Perfections by one self-same King.

The Captain's Description of Sebastian's coming a-
shore, is fine; and if compar'd with that before, of
Ferdinand's Escape describ'd in the Tempest, would show
the Fertility of the Author in his Variety on the same
Subject:— 'I know your Brother most provident
in Peril, &c.' There are several fine Lines and
Thoughts in the Scene betwixt Olivia and Viola; nor
must we omit the Duke's Advice to Viola, that a Man
should marry one younger than himself.

Olivia's Declaration of Love to Viola is very fine
and pathetick: 'Cesario, by the Roses of the Spring,
&c.' There is, in the Likeness of the Brother and
Sister, a Hint taken from the Menachmi and
Amphitryon of Plautus, as well as the Comedy of
Errors.
The Argument of The Winter’s Tale.

Polyxenes King of Bohemia having made a Visit to Leontes King of Sicily; Leontes being jealous that he had corrupted his Wife, employs Camillo to poison him; but he honestly informs Polyxenes of the matter, and flies away with him and his Train. On which, Leontes confines her to Prison, and causes her Daughter, of which she is deliver’d in the Goal, to be carry’d and expos’d by Antigonus, and she to be try’d for her Life; but she is clear’d by the Oracle of Apollo: And the King not giving ear to the Oracle, his Son and Heir immediately dies, and his Queen is likewise left for dead of Grief. He being struck with this, is extremely penitent. Antigonus is cast on the Coast of Bohemia; and there exposing the Child, with a Fardel full of Proof for her after-Discovery, he is devour’d by a Bear, the Ship cast away, and the Child taken up by a Shepherd, and bred as his own. But at about sixteen Years old, Florizel the King’s Son flying his Hawk o’er her Father’s Ground, sees and falls in love with her, vows Marriage; but being by his Father discover’d, he flies with his Wife to Sicily, by the Advice of Camillo; and in the Ship the Shepherd and his Son; Polyxenes goes after him with Camillo, and comes so near him, that he has no time to marry: but the Shepherd being taken, she is found to be the Daughter of Leontes expos’d by Antigonus, and so is marry’d to Florizel: and her Mother being found to be alive, the Play or History ends happily.

This Story needs no Critick, its Errors are visible enough; Shakespeare himself was sensible of this Grofsness of making the Play above sixteen Years; and therefore brings in Time as a Chorus to the fourth Act, to excuse the Absurdity: to which I refer you. Polyxenes’s Reflection on Art and Nature, I must transcribe; because it shews that Shakespeare’s Notion, contrary to that of our Anti-Aristbs, suppos’d Art and Nature consistent.

Per. For I have heard it said,
There is an Art, which in their Rideness

With
Plays of Shakespeare.

With great creating Nature.

Polyx. Say there be:
Yet Nature is made better by no Mean
But Nature makes that Mean: so over that Art,
(Which you say adds to Nature) is an Art
That Nature makes. You see, (sweet Maid,) we marry
A gentler Cyon to the wildest Stock,
And make conceive a Bark of baser kind
By Bud of nobler Race. This is an Art,
Which does mend Nature, change it rather; but
The Art is itself Nature.

Which last Line holds perfectly true of the Art of Poetry.

The Narration of the Difcovery in the last act, is not
only entertaining, but moving; and he seems accidental-
ly to have hit on something like the Ancients, whose
Catastrophes were generally in Narration. This is a
proof, that if our Poets had the Genius of Shakespeare, the
Antagonistic Representations of the Stage might easily and
with beauty be thrown into Narration, and so leave room
for the Poet to shew his Eloquence and his Imagery.

This Tale is taken from an old Story-Book of Dorastus
and Faunia: whence, I suppose, the Absurdities are co-
py’d, and the making Bohemia, of an inland, a maritime
Country.

Come now to the Historical Plays of Shakespeare; which,
with submision to the Writer of his Life, cannot be
plac’d under Tragedy; because they contain no Tragick
Imitation. They are Draughts of the Lives of Princes,
brought into Dialogue; and in regard of their mixture of
serious and Comical Characters, may be compar’d to the
Greek Pieces that were wrote before Æschylus and Sopho-
tles had reform’d the Stage of Athens; or the rambling
unartful Pieces first represent’d in Rome after the calling
in of the Etrurian Players, nay, after the Time of Livius
Andronicus. In their Extent they may be compar’d to
the Thefeids; the Heracleids, written by some Greek Poets,
and reflect’d on by Aristotle, in his Art of Poetry, for
imagining
imagining that the Unity of the Hero made the Unity of the Action.

These Instances from this polite Nation, will be a very good Pice for this Error of Shakespeare, who liv'd when the Stage was not regarded by the State, as it was in Athens. For had a Reformation then begun, he would doubtless have done as Monsieur Corneille did upon the studying the Art of the Stage; by which, the Plays which he wrote afterwards, excels'd those he wrote without any Knowledge of that Art.

I shall only add here, that since these Plays are Histories, there can be no manner of Fable or Design in them. I shall not therefore give the Plot, but refer the Reader to those Historians, where we may find the Stories at large, and then judge how near Shakespeare has kept to the Character, History has given us of them. He begins with King John, whose History you will find not only in the common English Chronicles, but also in Mr. Daniel, in Mr. Tyrrel, and Mr. Echard; especially in Mr. Tyrrel, in all its Extent and Particularities. But it must be remark'd, that he begins not the History with the Birth of King John, or the Manner of his obtaining the Crown; but with the Breach betwixt him and France, on the behalf of Arthur the Son of Geoffrey Plantagenet the true Heir.

I had some thoughts of placing an Abstract of the Reigns of the Kings before each of his historical Plays; but considering farther, I found, that to make it of any use, they would take up much more room than I could by any means allow; and the Princes, being all English, I find it might seem a little superfluous, since that is what every Gentleman, that is capable of reading this Poet, is very well acquainted with.

As for the Characters of this History, I think there are none of any Figure but the Bastard and Constance; they indeed engage your Attention whenever they enter. There is Boldness, Courage, Self-Assurance, Haughtiness, and Fidelity in whatever he says or does. But here is the Misfortune of all the Characters of Plays of this nature, that they are directed to no End, and therefore are of little Use; for the Manners cannot be necessary, and
and by consequence must lose more than half their Beauty. The Violence, Grief, Rage, and motherly Love and Despair of Constance, produce not one Incident, and are of no manner of use; whereas if there had been a just Design, a tragick Imitation of some one grave Action of just Extent, both these Characters being form'd by the Poet, must have had their Manners directed to that certain End, and the Production of these Incidents, which must beget that End.

There are too many good Lines in this Play for me to take notice of, or point to them all.

On new Titles.

For new-made Honour doth forget Mens Names, &c.

The Description which Chauffillon makes of the English Army, that comes with King John, is very good, and a handsom Compliment of a Patriot to his Country. You will find it beginning thus—His Marches are expedient to this Town, &c.—But I must not omit King John's first Speech to the French King, since it was so lately and so happily apply'd to the present Lewis, on the breaking off the Treaty of the Hague.

K. John. Peace be to France, if France in Peace permit
Our just and lineal Entrance to our own; If not, bleed France, and Peace ascend to Heaven: Whilst we, God's wrathful Agent, do correct Their proud Contempt that beats his Peace to Heaven.

The Scolding betwixt Eleanor and Constance is quite out of Character; and indeed 'tis a difficult matter to represent a Quarrel betwixt two Women, without falling into something indecent for their Degree to speak, as most of what is said in this Scene is. For whatever the Ladies of Stocks-Market might do, Queens and Princesses can never be supposed to talk to one another at that rate. The Account which the French and English Heralds give of the Battle to the Town of Angiers is very well worded; and it had been better we had heard
heard more of the Battles, and seen less of those ridiculous Representations. The Citizens Proposal of the Lady Blanch, &c. to the Kings, contains many Lines worth reading and remarking from this Line:—— ‘If love should go in quest of Beauty, &c.’

There is a considerable Part of the second Act lost of this Piece, it containing only two Pages, which are so well adorn’d with the well-drawn Passion of Constance, that we are oblig’d to Fortune that it is not lost with the rest. Her Passion in the first Scene of the third Act is likewise just and masterly, and well worthy our perusing with Care.

The Topick of Interest or Advantage is well handled in Falconbridge’s Speech, beginning thus:—— ‘Round-ed in the Ear, with that same Purpose-changer, that fly Devil, &c.’

Whatever Pandulph might really have urg’d to make a Breach betwixt the Kings, what Shakespeare makes him speak is perfectly the natural Result of the Notions and bigotted Opinions of those Times. The Passion of Constance, in the third Scene of the third Act, is extremely touching: among the rest, this one Line is admirable; ‘He talks to me, that never had a Son.’

The pleading of Prince Arthur with Hubert is very natural and moving, allowing for two or three playings on Words, which seem not so proper for that Place; see Scene 1. Act 4. Hubert’s Description of the People’s Confusion, on the Prodigies, is very well: Old Men and Beldams in the Street do prophesy on it. And King John’s Anger with Hubert, in the next Page, is well drawn, as the King’s Madness is. The hearty Englishman appears so well in the last Speech of the Play, that I must point it out, for some of the Gentle-men of this Age to study.

Remarks
Remarks on The Life and Death of Richard II.

Shakespeare has drawn Richard's Character, according to the best Accounts of History; that is, Insolent, Proud and Thoughtless in Prosperity, and full of the Notion, that he could not any way forfeit his Crown, being the Lord's Anointed; the common Flattery, by which Kings are perverted into Tyrants. But then he is Poor, Low, Dejected, Despairing on the Appearance of Danger. In Distress, always dispensing Compliance in all things; but never sincere in Performance, when the Danger is over. There are indeed several things that look something whimsical and extravagant, which yet are agreeable to what History has said of his Actions and Temper, in which our Poet has ever observed the Likeness.

The Topicks are not many in this Piece, but there are several Speeches, which are worth remarking; as that part of Bullingbrook's Speech which addresses to his Father, and Mowbray's on his Banishment.

The Impotence of mortal Power.

Gaunt. But not a Minute, King, that thou canst give: Shorten my Days thou canst with sudden Sorrow, And pluck Nights from me, but not lend a Morrow. Thou canst help Time to furrow me with Age, But stop no Wrinkle in this Pilgrimage. Thy Word is current with him for my Death, But dead, thy Kingdom cannot buy my Breath.

His Speech in the same Page is pathetic;

Things sweet to taste, &c.—

Richard's Account of Bullingbrook's cajoling the Mob:——

How he did seem to dive into their Hearts, &c.

Gaunt's Speeches to York and the King before he dies, are very moral and good. And from York's Speech we
we find, that Italy was then, or at least in the Poet's Time, as much in Vogue with our English Gallants, as France has been since, for Fashions, &c. And indeed Harry Stephens, a French Man, who liv'd much about Shakespear's Time, makes this Complaint, 'That the 'more a French Man was Romaniz'd, or Italianiz'd, 'the sooner he should be promoted by the Great Men, 'as having bestowed his Time well, and as being a 'Man fit for Employment.' Gaunt's Praise of Eng- 'land is noble and worthy so great a Genius and so great a Poet. He thought the Name of a True-born-English- 'man was so far from Contempt, like some of our modern Scriblers, that he makes Bullingbrook comfort himself in his Banishment with the Thought of being so. York's Speeches to the King, on his seizing Gaunt's Estate, are dramatick enough.

On Hope.
I will despair, and be at Enmity
With cozening Hope; he is a Flatterer, &c.

Richard's Speeches, Act 3; Scene 2. have in them some few Lines very good, and in many of his Speeches you will find something of Passion that is not amiss. What the Gardiner says, is not only very Poetical, but shews that Shakespear was well acquainted with that Art, and perfect in the Terms. But the finest thing in this Play is the Description that the Duke of York makes of Bullingbrook's and Richard's Entry into London:

Then as I said, The Duke great Bullingbrook,
Mounted upon a hot and fiery Steed, &c.

This is worthy our Poets Study, that they may learn how to make beautiful Descriptions of what is fitter to employ their Eloquence in Narrations, than to be expos'd to the Eye. The Scene between Bullinbrook, York, Aumerle, and the Dukes, is well; but it seems a little too forc'd in York, to be so earnest to have his only Son and Heir hang'd, when the King himself seems
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seems willing to pardon him. The Speech of the
Duchess is very well, beginning thus—Pleads he
in Earnest? look upon his Face, &c.

The want of a regular Design brings in abundance
of unnecessary Characters, of no manner of Ufe and
Beauty, as the Groom in the fifth Act of this Play.

There are some moral Reflections in Richard's Speech
in Prison. The same Chronicles and Histories quoted
to the former, will furnish this King's Life.

Remarks on the first and second Part of
Henry IV.

The Humour of Falstaff be what is most valu-
able in both these Parts, yet that is far more ex-
cellent in the first; for Sir John is not near so diver-
ing in the second Part. Hotspur is the next in Good-
ness; but that would have shew'd much more, had it
been in a regular Tragedy, where the Manners had not
only been necessary, but productive of Incidents noble
and charming. Glendour is fine for Comedy. As for
the Speeches, Reflections, &c. I shall point out the
best. Hotspur's Description of the finical Courtier is
very good; and most of the passionate Speeches of
Hotspur, except that ridiculous Rant of leaping up to
the Moon, and diving to the bottom of the Sea, &c.
which is absolute Madness. Falstaff's Speeches, when
he personates the King, are very pleasant. Worcester
to Hotspur contains some very judicious Reflections;
and so there are some very politic in the Speech of
King Henry to his Sons, and in all the Scene betwixt
them. Sir R. Vernon's Speech is very pretty. Falstaff's
Account of his Men, is very pleasant. What I have
to add on this first Part, is only as to the Character of
Falstaff; in which I think my self oblig'd to justify
him in his Choice. Speaking of this Character, the
Author of his Life tells us, that he once call'd him Sir
John Old-Castle, but was oblig'd to alter that Name,

some.
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some of the Family being then alive——- But I
don't know (says our Author) whether the Author
can not have been somewhat to blame in his second
Choice; since it is certain that Sir John Falstaff, who
can a Knight of the Garter, and a Lieutenant Ge-
eral, was a Name of distinuish'd Merit in the Wars
of France, in Hen. V. and Hen. VIth's Times.' But
to shew that Shakespeare is not in the least to blame in
this particular, we must consider, that the History
makes this Sir John Falstaff a Man of Figure in the
Army, and Knight of the Garter; yet that it is so far
from making him a Man of Merit there, that his Cowar-
dice lost the Battel, and betray'd the brave Talbor, as
Shakespeare himself gives Account to the King in Act 5.
Scene 1. Part 1. of Henry VI. And such a Cowardice
ought to stigmatize any Character to all Posterity, to
deter Men from the like. So that in this poetick Justice
I think Shakespeare so far from Blame, that he merits
Applause.

The second Part begins with a Speech of Rumour,
describing his own Nature from Experience and Fact.
Virgil, in the fourth Book of his Æneis, and Ovid, in
his Metamorphosis, have describ'd the same under the
Name of Fame. The Reader therefore may compare
the two Latin Bards with our English. The Rage of
Northumberland, on the Death of Hotspur, in some of
the last Lines, is very well.

On Glory built on the Multitude.
An Habitation giddy and unsure
Has he that buildeth on the vulgar Heart.
Oh! thou fond Many.

On the restless Cares of Kings, and Sleep.
How many thousands of my poorest Subjects
Are at this Hour asleep? Oh! Sleep! Oh! gentle Sleep!
Nature's soft Nurse! how have I frightened thee?

Westmorland's Speech to the Archbhishop of York and
the Rebels, on Rebellion, is very good. Falstaff's De-
defence
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fence of Drinking is pleasant. King Henry's Advice to Clarence is worth observing.

On Fortune.
Will Fortune never come with both Hands full?
But write her fair Words still in foulest Letters, &c.

On a Crown.
Oh! polish'd Preturbation! golden Care!
Thou keep'ft the Ports of Slumber open wide, &c.

On Gold.
For this the foolish over-careful Fathers
Have broke their Sleeps with Thought.

The Scene betwixt King Henry and his Son the Prince,
at the end of the fourth Act, is worth reading: As is the Chief Justice's Speech, in the second Scene of the fifth Act.

For these two Plays, consult the same English Histories
which are already quoted.

The Life of Henry V.

The Prologue to this Play is as remarkable as any
thing in Shakespeare, and is a Proof that he was extremely sensitive of the Absurdity which then possessed the Stage, in bringing in whole Kingdoms, and Lives, and various Actions in one Piece; for he apologizes for it,
and desires the Audience to persuade their Imaginations to
help him out, and promises a Chorus to help their Imagination.

For 'tis your Thoughts (says he) that now must deck
our Kings,
Carry them here and there, jumping o'er Times;
Turning the Accomplishments of many Years

Into
Remarks on the
Into an Hour-Glass; for the which Supply
Admit me Chorus to this History.

He here and in the foregoing Lines expresses how preposterous, it seem'd to him, and unnatural to huddle so many Actions, so many Places, and so many Years into one Play, one Stage, and two Hours. So that it is not to be doubted, but that he would have given us far more noble Plays, if he had had the good Fortune to have seen but any one regular Performance of this nature. The Beauty of Order would have struck him immediately, and at once have made him more correct, and more excellent; and I do not at all doubt but that he would have been the Sophocles of England, as he is now but little more than the Thespis, or at most the Æschylus. Tho Tragedy in Greece was founded on Religion, and came early under the Care of the Magistrate; yet by what I can discover, the Stage was as rude as ours till Æschylus gave it Majesty. But in England it had no such advantageous Foundation, nor any such nourishing Influence; yet Shakespeare, by his own Genius, brought it so far, as to leave it some Beauties which have never since been equal'd.

The Character of Hen. V. given by the Bishop of Canterbury, is very noble. His Discourse of the Salique Law, is a Proof that Shakespeare was well acquainted with the History of modern Times, and that very Controversy; which was an Argument of his Application to reading and will not let me think, hat having some Foundation of Latin, he should totally neglect that.

Obedience and Order.

Therefore doth Heaven divide
The State of Man in divers Functions, &c.

The fine Description of the State of the Bees, is worth a careful Observation in this same Speech. The King's Answer to the French Ambassadors, on the Dauphin's Present, is not only fine, but shews that Shakespeare understood Tennis very well, and is perfect in the Terms of the Art. The Chorus is forc'd to come in to fill up the Gap of Time, and help the Imagination of the Audience with a Narration of what is not represented. In this
Chorus are a few Lines of good Moral to the English, and therefore I transcribe them.

Oh! England! model to thy inward Greatness,
Like little Body with a mighty Heart;
What mightst thou do, that Honour would thee do,
Were all thy Children kind and natural?

King Henry the Vth's Speech to Scroop, &c. from this Line is very fine.

Oh! how hast thou with Jealousy infected.
The Sweetness of Affiance?

The latter end of the Constable of France's Speech, and part of the French King's, is worth perusing, as giving a noble Character of two English Kings; and Exeter's Answer to the French in the next Page shews the Spirit of an English Nobleman. The Chorus is necessitated to come in again, to tell all that must be suppos'd, to connect the representation before to that which follows. King Henry's Encouragement of his Men, contains a great many fine Lines. Another Chorus begins the third Act, to help out the Lameness of the Representation; and I wonder, when Shakespeare was sensible of the Absurdity of the bringing a Battle on the Stage, he should in some measure do it notwithstanding.

Where O! for Pity we shall much disgrace
With four or five most vile and ragg'd Foils
(Right ill-dispos'd in Brawl ridiculous)
The Name of Agincourt, &c.

A King but a Man.

"I think the King is but a Man as I am. The Violet smells to him as it does to me, &c."—Tho the Discourses of the King to Williams, &c. are very good, and full of Reason and Morality, yet contain they nothing Dramatick, and are indeed fitter for a Philosopher than a King.

On a King and Greatness.

Upon the King, &c.
Oh! hard Condition twin-born with Greatness,
Subject to the Breath of every Fool.
Remarks on the
Of Ceremony.
And what art thou, thou Idol Ceremony? &c.

See Grandpree's Description of the low Condition of the
English Army.

What I have already said of Shakespear's being sensi-
bile of the Defect of these historical Representations, is
confirm'd plainly in the Chorus of the fifth Act.

I humbly pray them to admit th' Excuse
Of Time, of Numbers, and due Course of things,
Which cannot in their huge and proper Life
Be here presented.

He shows how sensible he is of this, in the short Chorus
that ends this Play; saying,

Thus far with rough and all-unable Pen
Our bending Author hath pursu'd the Story,
In little room confining mighty Men;
Mangling by Starts the full Course of their Glory.

And indeed all that can be done in these Cases, is only
a Collection of so many Themes on different Subjects:
As in Burgundy's Speech, the Description of Peace and
its Advantages.

The Character of Fluellen is extremely comical, and
yet so very happily touch'd, that at the same time when
he makes us laugh, he makes us value his Character.
The Scene of Love betwixt Henry V. and Catharine is
extravagantly silly and unnatural: for why he should
not allow her to speak in English as well as all the other
French, I cannot imagine; since it adds no Beauty, but
gives a patch'd and pye-bald Dialogue of no Beauty or
Force.
The first and second Parts of Henry VI.

The Scene betwixt Talbot and the Countess of Auvergne contains something pretty enough. In the Bishop of Winchester he has perfectly drawn a haughty proud Church-man, that prefers his own Ambition to all things Divine and Human: And in the King, a weak, the pious Prince. And indeed all the Parts shew the Confusion of a government under such a Prince. The Speech of the Pucelle to the Duke of Burgundy, is very fine and artful. Talbot’s Persuasion of his Son to leave the Field, and secure in himself the Hopes of the Family, and his Refusal to leave his Father, is very pathetic. The Scene between Suffolk and Queen Margaret is full of natural Passion, and contains many fine Lines. The Praise of England in the Lord Say’s Speech to Jack Cade is good.

On War.

—Oh! War! thou Son of Hell,
Whom angry Heavens do make their Minister, &c.

The frequent and calm Debates in Council, in many of these Historical Pieces, have nothing Dramatick in them; as in the first Part of Henry VI.

Remarks on the third Part of Henry VI.

All the Scene between Henry, York, and the Peers, is shocking, and unworthy the Character of Noblemen and Soldiery, to insult a Prince when in their Power; and tho we allow such a thing might have been done in Fact, yet that is not sufficient to bring it on the Stage, where Verisimilitude prevails; whereas Truth,
that is, Matter of Fact, is sometimes so far from Probability, that a Man would scarce think it possible. York’s Passion is just. Richard’s Simile, where he compares his Father’s fighting to a Lion in a Herd of Neat, is very good. There are several Lines of Clifford’s Speech, very good. All these Skirmishes and Battles are ridiculous on the Stage, as Shakespeare himself has said in his Chorus before quoted; and yet he has scarce a Play without a great deal of Drums and Trumpets, &c., however I think four or five Battles in this Play too much. In one he has taken occasion to introduce King Henry VI. bemoaning the Misery of Civil War, and what he says on this Head is very well; and the Son bringing in his Father, whom he had kill’d in the Battle not knowing him, and the Father his Son, gives him greater occasion of moralizing. The same Fault of insulting the Vanquish’d, and even the Slain, is repeated.

The Mob.
Look as I blow this Feather from my Face,
And as the Air blows it to me again.

The long Soliloquy of Richard in the third Act is strangely unnatural; for, as the Duke of Buckingham justly has observ’d, they ought to be few and short. Nor would this, which is so frequent in our Poet, be borne from the best Hand that could now arise: but there is always by the Many, a bigotted Deference paid to our Predecessors, and Years add Authority to a Name. Our young Poets should never imitate our Shakespeare in this: for tho’ a Man may be suppos’d to speak a few Words to himself in the Vehemence of a Passion, as it does happen in Nature, of which the Drama is in all its Parts an Imitation; yet to have near fourscore Lines of calm Reflections, nay, Narrations to my self, by which the Hearer should discover my Thoughts and my Person, as here, and before, when Henry VI. is discover’d and taken; is unpardonable, because against Nature, and by consequence not at all according to Art. There are several good Lines in this Speech of Richard, but ill brought in. The Instances which Shakespeare makes him give of Nestor, Ulysses, and

Simon,
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Sion, are a proof still of his Knowledge at least in Ovid, and some other of the Latin Clafficks. The ill Omens given by Henry VI. of Richard's Death, are poetical enough.

Remarks on the Life and Death of Richard III. and Henry VIII.

The first of these Plays begins with a long Soliloquy of Richard’s, of forty or fifty Lines, to let the Audience know what Contrivances he had made for the Destruction of Clarence, and what a Villain he intended to be. But Richard, as he is here drawn, is not a fit Character for the Stage, being shocking in all he does; and we think (notwithstanding the huddling so much time into two Hours) that Providence is too slow, and too mild in his Punishment. The Antients have indeed introduc’d an Ateus or Thyestes, a Medea, &c. but the Cruelties committed by them, have been the sudden Effects of Anger and Revenge; whereas Richard is a calm Villain, and does his Murders deliberately, wading thro’ a Sea of his nearest Relations Blood to the Crown.

The second Scene betwixt the Lady Anne and Richard, is admirably written; and tho’ we cannot entirely agree with her in her yielding to the Murderer of her Husband and Father-in-Law, yet we allow that the Poet has made her speak all that the Subject and Occasion would allow. Clarence’s Dream is poetical and natural.

Conscience.

2 Vil. ‘ I will not meddle with it, it makes a Man a Coward, &c.’ Edward’s Speech is pathetick enough. And the Queen’s Passion on King Edward’s Death is just and natural.

R 2

On
REMARKS on the

On the momentary Grace and Favour of Men.
Oh! momentary Grace of mortal Men!
Which we more hunt for than the Grace of God, &c.

Buckingham's Account of his negotiating with the Citizens is well enough.

On Words in Grief.
Windy Attorneys to their Clients Woes,
Airy Succeders of intestine Joys, &c.

Against Conscience.
For Conscience is a word that Cowards use,
Devis'd at first to keep the Strong in Awe.

The Prologue to Henry VIII. shows, that Shakespeare thought more justly of the Stage than he perform'd, perhaps in mere Compliance with what then pleas'd the Audience, never considering that his Authority would have refin'd their Tastes. After having told us that this Play would move Pity, contain'd Truth, and was not destitute of Show, he goes on:

Only they,
That came here to hear a merry baudy Play,
A Noise of Targets; or to see a Fellow
In a long motley Coat guarded with yellow,
Will be deceiv'd: For gentle Hearer know,
To rank our chosen Truths with such a show
As Fool and Fight is, besides forfeiting
Our own Brains, and the Opinion that we bring,
That makes that only true we now intend,
Will leave us never an understanding Friend.

And indeed the Managers of our Stage have been all along afraid of reforming the Stage, lest they should run any hazard of a bad Audience, by giving them something more noble than they had known. And this has supported Barbarism and Baudy so long, where Art and true Wit should reside.
New Customs,
Tho' they be never so ridiculous,
Nay, let them be unmanly, yet are follow'd, &c.

What Lovel says will hold good of the Ladies of our times

A French Song and a Fiddle has no Fellow.

Now indeed Italian has got the start of the Monsieur,
but much of the same Excellence. Shakespeare, in all probability, wrote this Play to compliment Queen Elizabeth; at least it's plain, that he has taken every Opportunity of the Story to insert her Praises: as the Lord Chamberlain, having brought Anne Boleyn News of her being made Marchioness of Pembroke, says, —

I have perus'd her well,
Beauty and Honour in her are so mingled,
That they have caught the King: And who knows yet,
But from this Lady may proceed a Gem
To lighten all this Isle!

The same is again hinted, which is compleatly by the Prophecy of Archbishop Cranmer, which concludes the Play; to which he there adds a Praise of James the First, as the Effect and Reward of her Merits.

Queen Catharine's Speeches are good, for they are the natural Result of the Manners and Sentiments; as all that she says to Campeius and Wolsey, in the third Act, is very pathetic, and agreeable to a Lady of her Spirit, in her Condition. Norfolk's Description of the Cardinal's Discomposure, is good. The Scene betwixt Norfolk, Surrey, and Wolsey is dramatick; and that which follows betwixt Cromwell and Wolsey, very moving.

The State of Man.
This is the State of Man: to day he puts forth
The tender Leaves of Hopes; to morrow blossoms,

R 3

And
And wears his blushing Honours thick upon him:
The third day comes a Frost, a killing Frost;
And when he thinks, good easy Man, full surely
His Greatness is a rip'ning, nips his Root,
And then he falls as I do, &c.

_Ambition._

_Cromwel_, I charge thee fling away Ambition,
By that Sin fell the Angels; how can Man then,
The Image of his Maker, hope to win by’t?

The two different Characters of Wolsey, by Queen
Catharine and Griffith, are worth perusing.

This concludes the English Historical Plays: tho the
rest are indeed little better, yet they generally are within
a narrower Compass of Time, and take in fewer Actions.
Tho when they exceed the Unities, I see no reason why
they may not as well, and with as good reason, stretch
the Time to five thousand Years, and the Actions to all
the Nations and People of the Universe; and as there
has been a Puppet-Show of the Creation of the World,
so there may be a Play call’d the History of the World.

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**Remarks on the Tragedies of Shakespeare.**

**The Argument of Troilus and Cressida.**

_T_RO_Ⅰ_ having been long besiegd, _Achilles_ is by
_Polyxena_ kept from the Field, for he was in
love with her. _Antenor_ is taken Prisoner, and
in exchange for him, _Cressida_, Daughter to Calchas, is
given to _Diomed_ by the _Trojans_. _Troilus_, who is in love
with her, and first posses’sd of her by the Care of _Pan-
darus_.
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darst her Uncle, parts with her not without the utmost
Reluctance, they having vow'd Constancy to each other.
Hector being to fight Ajax, during the Truce Troilus
goes with him, and after the Fight gets Ulysses to go pri-
vately with him to the Tent of Callchas, where he dis-
covers her Fallhood to him, and Love to Diomede.
The Truce ending, the Battel is renew'd; and Patro-
clus being kill'd, Achilles comes out and kills Hector,
and Troilus and Diomede both fighting after in vain, the
Play ends with the Death of Hector by Achilles and his
Myrmidons.

This Play is alter'd by Mr. Dryden, and tho' clear'd
of some Errors, is far from a Play, even according to
the Rules laid down by Mr. Dryden before this very
Play, as he indeed confesses: but to alter a Play, and
leave the fundamental Errors of Plot and Manners, is
a very whimsical Undertaking. Shakespeare is to be ex-
cus'd in his falsifying the Character of Achilles, mak-
ing him and Ajax perfect Idiots, tho' sometimes
Achilles talks like a nice Reasoner, as with Ulysses; so
making the Manners unequal as well as unlike: I say,
Shakespeare is excusable in this, because he follow'd Lol-
lus, or rather Chaucer's Translation of him. But Mr.
Dryden, who had Homer to guide him right in this par-
ticular, is unpardonable. Thus Achilles is made to ab-
fent himself from the Field, for the sake of Polyxena;
whereas the receiv'd Story is, that it was upon the Quar-
rel betwixt Agamemnon and him, for taking away Briseis.
But I know not on what account both the Poets seem
fonder of the Barbarians than the Greeks, of Arbitrary
Power than Liberty, Ignorance than Learning. I know
not but it may be, that the Reason which gave Virgil
the Trojan for his Hero, is that which has made our
Bards so indulgent to the same Side, viz. a Notion
that the Trojans were the Source of our two Nations;
the with much less Reason and Probability on our side,
more on that of the Romans.

I wonder Mr. Dryden continu'd the Error of Shake-
speare, in making Cressida a Harlot. Her Character is
too scandalous to draw our Pity, and therefore he should
have made her virtuous, and not of blasted Honour:
Yet it must be acknowledg'd, that Mr. Dryden has corrected the Diction, and added a considerable Beauty in that Scene betwixt Hector and Troilus, upon the Surrender of Cressida, with whom he seems to part in the Original with too small Reluctance. Mr. Dryden himself tells us, that he took the Hint of that Scene from that in Euripides, between Agamemnon and Menelaus, which I shall give the Reader in my Remarks on Julius Caesar, that he may compare it with that of Shakespeare and this of Mr. Dryden, from whom I must a little differ in the Occasion: for the Ground of the Quarrel, in the Greek, is stronger than either Mr. Dryden's or Shakespeare's. For the Glory and Honour of Greece, depend on that of Euripides; but I can't find the Liberty of Rome much interested in that of Brutus and Cassius. But more of this, when I come to that Play.

I am something of Mr. Dryden's mind, that this was one of his earliest Plays, both for the Manners and Diction, which are both more faulty than usually in any of his latter Tragedies. There are, notwithstanding what I have said, a great many fine Lines in this Piece worth the remarking, as the very first Lines:

Call here my Varlet, I'll unarm again. Why should I war without the Walls of Troy? That find such cruel Battel here within? Each Trojan, that is Master of his Heart, Let him to Field; Troilus, alas! has none!

The several Pausas, &c. in the following Lines.

Troi. The Greeks are strong, and skilful to their Strength, Fierce to their Skill, and to their Fierceness valiant; But I am weaker than a Woman's Tear, Tamer than Sleep, fonder than Ignorance, Less valiant than a Virgin in the Night, And skillest as unprac'tis'd Infancy.

That Women are best when they are courted and not won.—The Fate of Grumblers, or Contemners of the Supreme.
Plays of Shakespeare. Two short but passionate Speeches of Troilus: the first begins, O! Pandarus, I speak about her Door, &c. The second—Even such a Passion doth embrace my Bosom, &c.

Pride cures Pride.

Pride has no other Glares
To show it self but Pride. For supple Knees
Feed Arrogance, and are the proud Man's Fees.

Fallen Greatness.
'Tis certain Greatness once fall'n out with Fortune,
Must fall out with Men too.

Great Actions forgot unless continu'd.
Time has, my Lord, a Wallet at his Back,
Wherein he puts Alms for Oblivion.

The Discovery of her Departure to her by Troilus is
as finely express'd.

I love thee with so strange a Purity, &c.

The Cautions he gives her against the Grecian Youth,
are not amiss.

The Grecian Youths are full of subtle Qualities, &c.
—Ulysses gives a very good Description of a lascivious Woman.

There's Language in her Eye, her Cheek, her Lip,
&c.

And his Character of Troilus is not less lively and
beautiful
—Not yet mature, yet matchless, &c.
The Argument of Coriolanus.

Caius Marius, going to the Wars against the Volscians, takes Corioli, and beats Tullus Aufidius, and has the Glory of the War attributed to him by the Consul. On this, he is to sue for the Consulship, which he disdains a great while; but at last submitting, he does it awkwardly, and almost bursting with Disdain and Pride. This makes him lose the Consulship, and on the Tribunes of the Peoples Words with him, rails so at the Commons and the Tribunes, that he is accus’d as a Traitor, and at last banish’d. He goes over to the Volscians, and heads their Forces against Rome, not yet prepar’d to receive him: Cominius first, and Menenius next, go to intreat him, but he proves inexorable, till his Mother, Wife, Son, Valeria, &c. prevail, and he makes Peace betwixt the Romans and Volscians. Aufidius, on his return to Antium, accuses him of Treason, and, with the Conspirators, flabs, and kills him.

The Character of Marius is truly dramatick; for his Manners are not only equal, but necessary to his Misfortunes. His Pride and Rashness are what History gives him, but his Modesty and Aversion to Praise I cannot find in Plutarch, who makes him very well satisfy’d with the Praise given by Cominius: And indeed it seems something opposite to his Pride, which both in the Play and History was so signal in him. Our Poet seems fond to lay the Blame on the People, and every where is representing the Inconstancy of the People. But this is contrary to Truth; for the People have never discover’d that Changeableness which Princes have done. And Plutarch, in the Life of Pyrrhus, seems sensible of this, when he says,—‘Thus Kings have no reason to condemn the People for changing for their Interest, who in that do but imitate them, as the great Teachers of Unfaithfulness and Treachery; holding him the bravesl, who makes the least Account of being an honest Man.’ And any one that will look over
over the Roman History, will find such Inconstancy, and such a perpetual Changeableness in the Emperors, as cannot be parallel'd in the People of any Time or Country. What the Greeks or Romans have ever done against any of their fortunate or great Generals, is easily vindicated from a guilty Inconstancy and Ingratitude. For the fault has always been in the Great Men, who swelling with the Pride of their Success, have thought, in deference to that, that they might and ought to do whatever they pleas'd; and so often attempted the Ruin of that Liberty themselves, for the Preservation of which their warlike Actions were only valuable. And so it was their changing their Manners, and not the People, that produc'd their Misfortunes; they lov'd them for defending their Country and Liberties, but by the same Principle must hate them, when they fought, by their Ambition and Pride, to subvert them; and this by a Constancy, not Variableness of Principle or Temper.

This is plain in the very Story of this Play, for their Anger was just against Coriolanus, who thought so well of his own Actions as to believe, that even the Rights, Customs, and Privileges of his Country were his Due for his Valour and Success. His turning a Traitor to his Country, on his Disgrace, is a Proof of his Principle: Camillus, on the contrary, banish'd on far less Occasion or Ground, brought his Country, in Distress, Relief against the Gauls; so far was he from joining them.

This Contempt of the People often proceeds from an Over-Value of our selves, and that not for our superior Knowledge, Virtue, Wisdom, &c. but for the good Fortune of our Birth, which is a Trifle no farther valuable in Truth, than as it is join'd to Courage, Wisdom, or Honour; yet that, when blindly valu'd by the Possessor, sets aside all Thoughts, and endeavours to obtain those nobler Advantages.

Our English Poets indeed, to flatter Arbitrary Power, have too often imitated Shakespeare in this Particular, and preposterously brought the Mob on the Stage, contrary to the Majesty of Tragedy, and the Truth of the Fact. Shakespeare has here represented, as in Julius Caesar, the Commons of Rome, as if they were the Rabble of an Irish
REMARKS on the
Irish Village, as senseless, ignorant, silly and cowardly; not remembering that the Citizens of Rome were the Soldiers of the Commonwealth, by whom they conquered the World, and who, in Julius Caesar's time, were at least as polite as our Citizens of London: and yet, if he had but consulted them, he would have found it a difficult matter to have picked out such ignorant unlicked Cubs to fill up his Rout.

It is no hard matter to prove that the People were never in the wrong but once; and then they were biased by the Priests to choose Barabbas and cry out Crucify.

I have not room here to examine this Point with that Clearness that I might, nor is it so much to our present purpose; and yet I presume the Digression is not so foreign to the Matter, as to deserve a judicious Censure.

The Character of Martius is generally preserved, and that Love of their Country, which is almost peculiar to Rome and Greece, shown in the principal Persons. The Scene of the Mother, Wife, and Valeria, is moving and noble. There are a great many fine Lines in this Play, tho the Expression or Diction is sometimes obscure and puffy. That of Citiz. 1. is very just on all proud Men.

And would be content to give him good Report for it, but that he pays himself with being proud.

The Fable that Menenius tells the People, tho in History, is very well brought in here, and express'd.

Honour ill founded upon the People.

'He that depends upon your Favours, swims with Fins of Lead.' You may look in the beginning of this Speech in the foregoing Page. The noble Spirit of Volumnia is well express'd in her Speech, and in all that Scene, where the Character is admirably distinguished from Virgilia and Valeria. The Speech of Coriolanus to the Soldiers, is good; beginning,

———If any such be here
(As, it were Sin to doubt) that love this Painting, etc.

The
The Discourse betwixt the two Officers in the Capitol, is worth reading on the Head of Popularity.

Against Custom.
Custom calls me to it.

In the Scene betwixt the Tribunes and Martius, the haughty Pride, and insolent and virulent Temper of Coriolanus, is justly painted.

Menenius is drawn an old humorous Senator, and indeed he talks like one, in defence of the Pride and Outrage of his Friend; and the next Page, when he asks what he has done against Rome, &c. when it is plain he was against the Rights of the Commons, as essential to the Government as the Nobles; perhaps more, if that State be thorowly considered. Volumnia's Speech to her Son is not amiss. And that of Coriolanus is well express'd.

Away my Disposition, and possess me, Some Harlot's Spirit, &c.

The Thoughts are not only pretty, but very natural to his Pride on this Occasion.

On the Turns of the World.
O World! thy slippery Turns! Friends now fast-sworn, Whose double Boforms seem to wear one Heart, &c.

For the Life and Character of this Man, you may read Plutarch's Lives, and Dion Halicarn.

The
ON the Death of some Emperor, his Sons Saturninus and Bassianus stand Candidates for the Empire. But Titus Andronicus returning from the Wars against the Goths in triumph, brings Tamora Queen of the Goths, Chiron, Demetrius, and Alarbus her Sons, etc. He gives the Empire to Saturninus the eldest, and Lavinia for his Wife, as well as all his Prisoners for a Gift. Bassianus seizes Lavinia as his Spouse, and bears her off. Titus kills his Son Mutilus, for stopping him in the pursuit of her. The Emperor falling in love with Tamora, marries her, and Bassianus Lavinia. But Chiron and Demetrius being both in love with her, quarrel who shall have her; till Aaron, a Negro Favourite of the Empress, reconciles them, adviseth them to murder her Husband in the Chafe, and ravish her by turns, cutting off her Hands and Tongue. To which the Mother agrees, resolv'd to ruin the whole Family, in revenge of her Son Alarbus's Death by the Andronici, at their Brother's Tomb. They execute their Design, and having thrown the Body of Bassianus into a Pit, Aaron trains two of Titus's Sons to the place where they falling in, the Emperor is brought to find them; and so the Murder, by a Letter, etc. being put on them, they are order'd to be try'd, are condemn'd and put to death for the Murder. Lavinia in the mean while is found in that Condition by her Uncle Marcus, carry'd home; and by the help of Ovid's Metamorphosis, and an Arrow writing in the Sand, discovers her Husband's Murderers, and her Ravishers. Aaron before the Death of the Brothers, comes to Titus, and gets his Hand to redeem his Sons Life, and has their Heads brought to him soon after. Lucius, the only surviving Son, is banish'd for endeavouring to rescue his Brothers. He goes to the Goths, and brings them against Rome, to revenge the Wrongs of his House; having taken the Moor in his March, with the black Basilard he had by the Empress;
Plays of Shakespeare.

Empress; to save whose Life, he discovers all the Villanies done by them. On the News of the Approach of the Goths with Lucius at their head, Tamora undertakes to wheedle old Titus to pacify his Son, &c. So disguising herself like Revenge, and her two Sons like Murder and Rape, she goes to him; he knows them, and complies so far, that he will send for Lucius, provided she and the Emperor meet him at his House; and he stops Chiron and Demetrius, kills them, and bakes them in a Pye, of which the Mother eats. Then Titus kills his Daughter Lavinia, upon the Emperor's saying, that Virginus did well in doing so. Then he stabs the Empress, and the Emperor him, and Lucius the Emperor: and having declared all the matter to the People, he is chosen Emperor, the Moor condemn'd to be bury'd alive, and so the bloody butchering Play concludes.

As this Play is not founded in any one Particular on the Roman History, tho' palm'd upon Rome; so the whole is so very shocking, that if there be any Beauties in the Diction, I could not find them, or at least they are very faint and very few. I can easily believe what has been said, that this is none of Shakespeare's Play, that he only introduc'd it, and gave it some few Touches. Such Devils incarnate are not fit for the Drama; the Moor describes himself a degree more abandon'd than the Devil himself; and Tamora, when Lavinia is seiz'd, and Bassianus kill'd, shows her self not much better. This is so contrary to Nature and Art, that all the Crimes are monstrously beyond the very Name of Scandalous. Well might Rapin throw the Infamy of Barbarity upon us, as a People divided from the rest of the World, and wanting that Politeness and Civility, because we lov'd Blood in our Recreations. But I think this only the Fault of the Poets, who have been too ignorant or too cowardly to venture on a Reformation of an Abuse, which prevail'd thro' the Mistake of the first Attempts this way, supposing that Tragedy must be something very barbarous and cruel: and this false Notion has ever since fill'd the Scene with inhuman Villanies, that ought to be heard of no where but at Tyburn; nay, worse than were
were ever suffer'd in this Climate, which brings forth Men too brave to be guilty of such Inhumanities, and cannot therefore be pleas'd with them in the Representation; at least would be much better pleas'd with the contrary Practice, according to the Antients.

The Argument of Romeo and Juliet.

The Montagues and Capulets, two eminent Families of Verona, being at mortal odds, Romeo the Son and Heir of Montague falls in love with Juliet, the Heires of the Capulets, at a Mask, and she with him. They agree, and are marry'd privately at Fryar Lawrence's Cell. After which, Tybalt, a hot fiery Capulet, meets Romeo in the street, and would needs quarrel with him; but Romeo, in regard of his having just marry'd his Cousin, took all so patently, that Mercutio, the Prince of Verona's Relation, could not bear Tybalt's Insolence; so fighting him, is kill'd: and Romeo on this (Tybalt returning) fights and kills him, and makes his Escape to the Fryar's Cell. The Prince hearing the Case from Benvolio, condemns Romeo to Banishment, on pain of Death. When having past the Night with his Wife, by the help of a Ladder of Cords, he goes to Mantua; the Fryar having agreed to send him News perpetually of his Wife. But Count Paris having been in love with Juliet, presses her Father to marry her out of hand, and obtains his Suit. She to prevent it takes a Potion that should make her seem dead; and she was bury'd in the Monument of the Family. Romeo hearing of her Death, buys Poifon, and comes by night to Verona, and going to her Monument to take it, and die there with her, finds Count Paris, who forces him to fight, and is kill'd by him; but then Romeo enters the Monument, takes his Poifon and dies. The Fryar comes, and Juliet awakes, finds Romeo dead, and so stabs her self and dies. The Prince and both the Fathers being come, the Fryar, and
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and Romeo's Man, and Paris's Page, make a full Discovery of the whole: so the two Fathers are reconcil'd, and resolve to set up Statues to them both.

Tho this Play has no less than five or six Murders, yet they are nothing a-kin to those of the foregoing Piece: These, for the most part, are the Effect of Heat and Passion, and by way of Duels, which Custom has given a sort of Reputation to, as being upon the square. If therefore they are faulty, they yet are of that nature that we pity; because every Gentleman is liable to fall into that, by the Necessity of Custom. Tho this Fable is far from Dramatick Perfection, yet it undeniably raises Compassion in the latter Scenes.

There are in it many Beauties of the Manners, and Sentiments, and Diction. The Character of Mercutio is pleasant and uniform; that of Tybalt always equal, as indeed they all are: the Nurse is a true Comick Character, tho some of our Chit-Chat Poets would look on it as Farce or low Comedy. In Benvolio's Account of Romeo to his Father and Mother, are many fine, musical, and sounding Lines.

Love

Love is a Smoke made of the Fume of Sighs;
Being purg'd, a Fire, sparkling in Lovers Eyes;
Being vex'd, a Sea, nourish'd with loving Tears:
What is it else? A Madness most discreet,
A choking Gall, and a preserving Sweet.

To point to particular Lines, would be endless: for, there often comes a fine sounding Verse well express'd, in the midst of others of little or no Beauty. Mercutio's Harangue on Dreams is extremely pleasant and whimsical, and the latter end very good Satire.

Of Dreams.

———True, I talk of Dreams
Which are the Children of an idle Brain,
Begot of nothing but vain Phantasy,
Which is as thin a Substance as the Air,
And more inconstant, than the wind who woos
Even now the frozen Bosom of the North.

What Romeo says on his first seeing Juliet, is very
pretty:

Her Beauty hangs upon the Cheek of Night,
Like a rich Jewel in an Ætnip's Ear.

Whether Passion be so pregnant of Similes, as they are
every where given us by Romeo and Juliet, I dare not de-
termine; since to say that all they speak is not natural,
would be to provoke too many, who admire it as the
Soul of Love.

Mercutio's conjuring for Romeo is pleasant, tho it ends
a little too smutty for an Audience. It begins, Romeo,
Humour, Passion, Madman, Lover, &c. The Scene be-
twixt Romeo and Juliet, when he is in the Garden, and
she at her Window, tho it contain many things that will
not join with Probability, and tho perhaps Shakespear like
Cowley was a little corrupted by reading Petrarch, that
modern Debaucher of Poetry into Conceits and Conun-
drums; yet the Fancy is every where so fine, and Nature
so agreeably painted, that we are pleas'd with the very
Fucus, and persuade our selves that it is pure unfosphi-
cated Nature. And on the Earth and its Products, the
Fryar speaks well. And what he says to Romeo on early
rising, is pretty enough. The Soliloquy of Juliet con-
tains several good Lines; as

Love's Heralds should be Thoughts,
Which ten times faster glide than the Sun's Beams.

Against violent Delights.
These violent Delights have violent Ends,
And in their Triumph die like Fire and Powder,
Which, as they kifs, consume.

There are likewise a great many fine Lines in Juliet's
Soliloquy; but her Thought of cutting him out into little
Stars,
Plays of Shakespeare.

Stars, is ridiculous. The parting of Romeo and Juliet, is very pretty. The Friar's Comfort to the Father and Lover, in their clamorous Sorrow for the suppos'd Death of Juliet, is not amiss.

Romeo's Description of the poor Apothecary and his Shop, is excellent, and copy'd by Otway. This Story is taken out of Bandello's Novels.

The Argument of Timon of Athens.

Timon a Nobleman of Athens, of a vast Estate and Riches, by his Bounty brings himself to want; tries his Friends, who forgo him in his Distress, and deny him the Money he desires to borrow of them. This makes him so wild, that he leaves Athens, and retires to a Wood, where he turns Man-hater; But digging accidentally for Roots, finds a hidden Treasure, of which he gives Alcibiades and his Whores great store. This brings several to him to make their court; in hopes of his shining again: but he despisings all, gives only Money to his thankfiul Steward, who came to do him Service in his Distress. The Senators come to make him Offers and Places, to appease Alcibiades; but he refuses all, with Curses on Mankind: And dying, leaves his Epitaph in these words—

'Here lies a wretched Carse, of wretched Life bereft,
'Seek not my Name; a Plague consume you Caitiffs left.
'Here lie I Timon, who all living Men did hate,
'Pass by and curse thy fill, but stay not here thy Gate.

This Play is plainly taken from Lucian's Timon; and I wonder that Shakespeare rather chose to give Roman Names to his Persons, as Lucius, Lucullus, &c. than Gnathonides, Philiades, Demeas, a flattering Orator, from whence our Author seems to have taken his Poet; Thracides a Philosopher, but not of Apianthus's kind, but a Lover.
Remarks on the Lover of Money, or rather a Hypocrite; Blasphemy, Laches, Gniphon; Apimander is indeed Shakespeare's own, and much better for the end he introduces him, than Thrastrus could have been, tho' the latter is better in Lucian. Shakespeare has thrown the Infamy on the Poet, which Lucian threw on the Orator; not considering that Poets made another sort of figure in Athens, where the Scene lies, than they do in England; the State thinking them so useful to the publick, that on the death of Eupolis in a Sea-Fight, all Poets were for the future forbid to go to the War. Yet a Poet methinks should have more regard to his Art and himself, than to bring in a Character of one mean or ridiculous. But Mr. Shadwell, who has pretended to alter this Play, has made him a very Scoundrel; and the Players always take care in Dress and Action to make him more so.

But this is not the only thing in which Mr. Shadwell has made this Poem worse in the Copy or Amendments than it is in the Original. He has created two Ladies of his own, with a very odd Design: Melissa he makes a Woman of Quality and Honour, but has given her Qualities more abandon'd than a Prostitute; and Evandra is a Whore profess'd, but to her he has given Gratitude, Love and Fidelity, even to the forsaken of the World, to bear the Hardships of Timon's Miseries; to persuade the Town that a Whore is a more eligible and excellent Creature, than a Woman of Honour. Such Doctrines as these, have rais'd so many Enemies to the Stage, with too much Reason and Justice. For in them indeed the Stage has loft all its Beauty and greatness, nay, and all its Art and Genius; it being so easy a matter to please at the expence of Religion and Morality, but so hard to do it on the solid Grounds of Art, which are subservient to Virtue, and, I may say, an Assisitant to Religion, in purging and reforming the Manners.

It is plain that the Plot is not regular as to Time or Place, but the Action may be look'd on as pretty uniform; unless we would make the Banishment and Return of Alcibiades an under-Plot, which yet seems to be born of the Main Design.
The Play is full of moral Reflections and useful Satire. The Characters are well mark'd and observ'd, and the Diction, generally speaking, expressive.

On Ceremony or Compliments.
Ceremony was but devis'd at first
To set a Gloss on saintly Deeds, hollow Welcomes, &c.

The Glory of this Life.
Like Madness is the Glory of this Life, &c.

The Trying and Refusal of the Friends is very touching, and too natural and obvious to need a Comment; a Hint of this is in the latter end of Lucian's Dialogue of Timon.

Against Duelling.
Your Words have took such pains, as if they labour'd
To bring Mankind into Form, and set Quarrelling
Upon the Head of Valour.

Nor is Alcibiades's Answer much amiss.
The false Supper Timon invites his false Friends to, is all Shakespeare's Contrivance. Timon's Curtse on Athens, in the beginning of the fourth Act, are worthy his Rage and Passion.

Let me look back on thee, O thou Wall,
That girdles in those Wolves——

The parting of the Servants is something touching.
Timon's Speech, tho' disguis'd too much in affected Words, contains good satirical Reflections.

On Gold.
Thus much of this will make
Black, White; Foul, Fair; Wrong, Right;
Base, Noble; Old, Young; Cowards, Valiant; &c.

The Scene betwixt him, Alcibiades, Timandra, &c. is full of wholesome Satire against Whoring; and the
Speech of Timon, after they are gone out, is very moral. The Scene betwixt Timon and Apamantus, contains many fine Reflections and Lines, the whole being very Dramatick.

Gold.
What a God's Gold, that he is worshipp'd
In a bafer Temple than where Swine feed?
'Tis thou that rigg'ft the Bark, and plow'ft the Foam,
Settlest adm'd Reverence in a Slave, &c.

In short, the Scenes betwixt him and his Steward, and the Senators and him, are worth reading. The Epitaph seems to be taken from this;

Hic jaceo, vita misera; inopia, solutus,
Nomen ne quaras, sed male sute peri.

The Argument of Julius Cæsar.

Caious Julius Cæsar having now vanquish'd all his Enemies, and fix'd himself in the perpetual Dictatorship, the Party of Liberty conspire to dispatch him. Caious Cassius, Metellus Cimber, Cæsa, and Brutus, agree to stab him in the Senate-house. He is deter'd by Dreams, Prodigies, and his Wife Calpurnia's Prayers, from going to the Senate that day, being the Ides of March; but Decimus Brutus and the other Conspirators coming to him persuade him from his Superstition; so he goes, and by the way receives a Paper with a Lift of the Conspirators, but will not look at it. In the Senate-house Metellus Cimber kneels to beg the Repeal of his Brother's Banishment, which when Cæsar dentes, they all come in the same manner, till Cæsa gives the first Stab: and when Brutus wounds him, he falls with Es tu Brute? Anthony being drawn aside by Trebonius, flies away on the noife of Cæsar's Death; but coming to them by Permission, agrees with the Murderers, and obtains leave to bury and praise Cæsar in the Market-place, or Forum,
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according to custom: Brutus having first given the People an Account of what the Conspirators had done, and justify’d it with Reasons. Anthony makes such an Oration, that he sets the People in a Mutiny, who burn the Conspirators Houses, &c. Brutus and Cassius, and the rest of them, fly out of Rome. At the Camp at Sardis, Cassius meets Brutus, and there happens a Quarrel betwixt them about Brutus’s not pardoning Lucius Pella, and on Cassius’s not sending Money to pay the Army. This being over, and they Friends and Separated, the Ghost of Cesar appears to Brutus, and says he’ll meet him again at Philippi: whither, when the Armies are gone, Octavius and Mark Anthony follow, fight, and beat them. Cassius kills himself on a mistake, and Brutus on his being close Pursu’d.

This Play or History is call’d Julius Caesar, tho’ it ought rather to be call’d Marcus Brutus. Caesar is the shortest and most inconsiderable Part in it, and he is kill’d in the beginning of the third Act. But Brutus is plainly the shining and darling Character of the Poet; and is to the end of the Play the most considerable Person. If it had been properly call’d Julius Caesar, it ought to have ended at his Death, and then it had been much more regular, natural, and beautiful. But then the Moral must naturally have been the Punishment or ill Success of Tyranny.

I know that a Noble-man, of great Judgment in the Drama, is and has been for some time altering this Play. In which, I believe, Shakespeare will have a better Fate than in most of those which have been alter’d. For generally they who have undertaken this Province, have been careful to leave all the Faults, and to rob him of many of the Beauties. But this has been, because few, who have attempted it, knew more of the Art of the Stage than our Author, and wanted his Genius to relish those things which were really good. But the principal Character, Caesar, that is left so little touch’d by Shakespeare, will merit his Regard; and the Regulation of the Design, without doubt, will be the Object of his Care and Study: and then there cannot be so much of this remaining, as to rob the Alterer of the Honour of the whole;
REMARKS on the whole; for the two best things in the Play are after the Death of Caesar, where the Action ends, viz. the Orations of Brutus and Anthony, and the Quarrel betwixt Brutus and Cassius. These Orations are indeed the beginning of a new Action, the Deaths of Brutus and Cassius; and have nothing (in a Dramatick Sense) to do with the Death of Caesar, which is the first Action. But this is a Part of the Drama which our Shakespeare is not to accountable for. We shall therefore proceed to those Beauties of which he is undoubtedly Master. The Manners first, and here I think he is generally wonderful; for there is the Likeness in all, and a perfect Convenience and Equality.

What Mark Anthony says to the imaginary People of Shakespeare's Rome, is so artful, and so finely taken from the very Nature of the thing, that I question whether what the real Mark Anthony spoke, could be more moving or better calculated to that effect. Plutarch says nothing of it, but we find that Appian has given us some Fragments of Anthony's Oration on this Occasion, which in Honour of our Shakespeare I'll transcribe: for tho he seems to follow this Author chiefly in his Play, yet has he not borrow'd the Oration either of Brutus or Anthony, tho one he found there entire, and the other so supply'd, that he might easily gather the Connection.

Anthony's Oration, in Appian.

"It is not just, Gentlemen, that I alone should undertake the Funeral Praises of this great Man; it were fitter his Country did declare them. I will therefore, with the Voice of the Republick, and not my own, only make Recital of those Honours, which, whilst he was living, the People of Rome confer'd upon him for his Virtues."

"Having said this, he began with a sad and sorrowful Countenance the Recital of Caesar's glorious Titles, pronouncing every thing distinctly, and stopping more particularly at those by which they had made him more than Man; as Sacred, Inviolable, Father of his Country, Benefactor, Prince, and many others, which till then had never been given to any Man: At every word,
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word, turning towards the Body, and animating his
Speech by his Gesture; and when he pronounce'd any
one of those Titles, he added some intermingled Terms
of Grief and Indignation; as when he recited the
Decree of the Senate, calling him Father of his Coun-
try'—"See there, said he, the Testimony of
your Acknowledgments'—"And in pronouncing these
Words—Holy, Sacred, Inviable, and the Refuge of
the Miserable, he added'—"Never any one, that
fled to him for Refuge, perish'd; yet he himself is
murder'd, tho made Holy and Sacred by our Decrees,
without having exacted these Titles from us, or ever
defir'd them. And surely we are in a shameful Sla-
very indeed, if we give those Titles to unworthy Per-
sons who never ask'd them of us. But Oh! faithful
Citizens, you purge your selves well from this Re-
proach by the Honour you now pay his Memory."

After this, reciting the Act of the Oath, by which they
were all oblig'd to guard the Person of Caesar, and to
employ all their Forces so, that if any attempted his
Person, whoever expos'd not his Life in his Defence,
should be execrable; he rais'd his Voice, and extend-
ing his Hands towards the Capitol, cry'd out'—"Oh
"Jupiter! Protector of my Country, behold me ready
to revenge as I have sworn; and since it is a thing re-
solv'd by the Judgment of all good Men, I beseech
thee, with all the other Gods, to be favourable to me."

A Tumult hereupon arising among the Senators, who
believ'd these Words to be manifestly address'd to them,
Anthony, to appease them, turn'd the Discourse, and
said'—"But, Gentlemen, this Accident must ra-
ther be attributed to some God, than to Men; and
we ought rather to provide against the present Ne-
cessities, than speak of things past, since we are
threaten'd with extreme Miseries for the future, and
are upon the point of falling again into our antient
Seditions, and the seeing all the Nobility of the City
perish. Let us then conduct this sacred Person among
the Gods solemnly, in mournful Elegies singing his
Praise."—"After having said these Words, he
'tuck'd up his Robe, as if he had been posses'd with

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some Spirit; and girding it about him, that he might
have his Hands more at liberty, he went and plac'd
himself near the Bed where the Corps lay, upon an e-
minent Place; and opening the Curtain, and looking
in, he began to sing his Praises, as of a Celestial Di-
vinity. And the better to make him be believ'd to be
of that Race, he lifted his Hands up to Heaven, reci-
ting even to the loss of Breath his Wars, his Combats,
his Victories, the Nations he had subdu'd, the Spoils
he had brought away, speaking of every thing as a
Miracle; and crying out many times "Thou
alone art he who haft return'd Victorious from so
many Fights: Thou alone art he who haft reveng'd
thy Country of the Injuries done her for three hundred
Years together, and constrain'd People, till then un-
conquerable, viz. the Gauls, who alone took and
burnt the City, to ask Pardon on their Knees."
Having said these things, and many more, as of a di-
vine Person, he lower'd his Voice, and in a mournful
Tone, with Tears in his Eyes, lamented the unworthy
Death of his Friend, wishing that he could redeem his
Life with his own; and at length abandoning himself
to Grief, he was so far transported, as to discover the
Body of Caesar, and to show at the top of his Pike his
Robe pierc'd with the Stabs he had receiv'd, and all
Stain'd with his Blood, &c.*

I have given all this from Appian, that the Reader
may see, as it were, the whole Procedure of Anthony
on this Occasion; and from this make a Judgment on
his Oration, and what Shakespeare has made him speak:
which if not so adapted to the Roman People, certainly
was very agreeable to them, as represented by him in
his Play.

The other thing in this Play is the famous Quarrel be-
twixt Brutus and Cassius, in the second Scene of the fourth
Act. This has always receiv'd a just Applause, and has
by Mr. Dryden, in his Preface to Troilus and Cressida,
been prefer'd to a no less famous Scene of a Quarrel be-
twixt Agamemnon and Menelaus, in the Iphigenia in Aulis
of Euripides. His Words are these——— The Occasion
which
which Shakespeare, Euripides, and Fletcher have all taken, is the fame, grounded upon Friendship; and the Quarrel of two virtuous Men, rais'd by natural Degrees to the Extremity of Passion, is conducted in all three to the Declination of the same Passion, and concludes with the warm renewing of their Friendship. But the particular Ground-work, which Shakespeare has taken, is incomparably the best; because he has not only chosen two of the greatest Heroes of their Age, but has likewise interested the Liberty of Rome and their own Honours, who were the Redeemers of it, in the Debate.

I hope it will be no Injury to our Countryman, to do Justice to an old Greek Poet of the first Magnitude. To that end, I must needs say, that the Advantage Mr. Dryden gives to the Briton is equally due to Euripides; for certainly Agamemnon and Menelaus, in the Poetick World at least, and in the System of Heroes in the time Euripides wrote, were as great as Brutus and Cassius; one of whom perhaps cannot carry away the Prize of the greatest Hero of his Age, without some Dispute. Next, in the Quarrel of Euripides, not the Disappointment of some Pay of Legions, or the Denial of quitting a Man guilty of Bribery, which both were past; but the Fate, the Glory, and the Honour, if not the Safety, of all Greece depended on the Ground of their Difference.

But whether this of Shakespeare be so well prepar'd, have those fine turns in it, or come as naturally to its Declination as this of Euripides, I leave to the Judgment of the Reader. But I must desire that some grains of allowance may be made for the badness of a Translation, which however good, must fall much short of the Beauties of the Original.

To shew the Preparation of this Quarrel, I shall give the Argument of the first Act; for Mr. Barnes, in his Edition of Euripides, has divided his Plays into Acts.

Agamemnon now repenting that he had agreed to the sacrificing of his Daughter, in the Night-time consults with an old faithful Servant of his how to prevent her Arrival in the Camp, where she was hourly expected with her Mother Clytemnestra. To this Servant S 2 therefore
REMARKS on the
therefore he entrusts a Letter to be deliver'd to his
Wife, in which he desires her not to bring Iphigenia
to Aulis. In this Act, Agamemnon declares the first
Seeds of the Trojan Expedition, and gives an Insight
into the present Fable.'
The second Act begins with Menelaus intercepting the
Messenger, and striving to get the Letter from him.

Old Man. Oh! Menelaus! spare yourself a Guilt,
Unworthy of your self and of your Fame.
Mene. No more, no more; thou'rt to thy Lord too
faithful.
Old M. Y'upbraid me with a Virtue, not a Crime.
Mene. If thou persift, thou shalt full soon repent thee:
Old M. They are the King's Dispatches you would seize;
And those you ought not, Sir, to violate.
Mene. Thou ought'st not, Wretch, by guilty Faith misled,
To bear Perdition to the Grecian Glory.
Old M. Of that, am I no Judge—forsoe my Packet.
Mene. I will not.
Old M. Nor will I quit it.
Mene. Or let it go, or from my Hand receive
Immediate Death.
Old M. I count it Glory for my Lord to die.
Mene. Villain, let go thy Packet—Dares a grov'ling
Slave
Contend in saucy Words with mighty Kings?
Old M. My Lord! my Lord! O! Agamemnon hear me!
With violent hands he robs me of thy Letters.

Enter Agamemnon.

Agam. What Noise? what Tumult's this, within my
Hearing?
Old M. Hear me, Great Sir, I will the Truth unfold.
Agam. Why, Menelaus, hast thou thus abus'd
My faithful Servant?
Turn, turn thy guilty Eye, and look on me!
If still thou canst behold my injur'd Face.
Agam. Yes, did the deadly Basilisk it self
Ride on thy fiery Balls, I thus durst view thee——
The Son of Aineus will by none be brow-beat.

_Mene._ See'ft thou these Letters full of base Contents?

_Agam._ Yes, I do see them, and in them thy Crime;
Which I———but give 'em to me strait———

_Mene._ Not till the Grecian Chiefs have heard them read.

_Agam._ And have you then——but sure you durst not do't,
Thou durst not break thy Sovereign's Letters open.

_Mene._ Yes, yes, I know 'twill vex thy haughty Soul,
To have thy secret Treasons thus expos'd.

_Agam._ O! all ye Gods! what Insolence is this!

_Mene._ From Argos you expect your Daughter here?

_Agam._ And what have you to do, with saucy Eye,
To over-look my Actions?

_Mene._ My Will, Sir, is my Right——I'm not thy Slave.

_Agam._ 'Tis well, Sir, wondrous well, that I Supreme
Of Lords and Kings, must be depriv'd the Right
To govern my own Family as I please!

_Mene._ You are not fit t'enjoy that common Right,
Your Mind's unsettled, veering as the Wind.
For, with thy self at War, it now determines
One thing, the following Moment whirls about,
And then designs another; nor fix'd in that,
Succeeding Minutes vary your Resolves.

_Agam._ Oh! Spite, spite, spite! a spiteful Tongue is
odious!

_Mene._ But an unconstant and a various Mind
Is still unjust, and still to Friends unknown.
Your self I will lay open to your self;
But let not Pride and Anger make you deaf,
Averse to Truth———I shall not praise you much.
Look back, look back, recal, recal the Time,
When your Ambition zealously purfu'd
Supreme Command o'er all the Grecian Chiefs,
To lead our vengeful Arms to treacherous Troy.
An humble Seeming you indeed put on,
As if you'd shun what most your Heart desir'd.
How lowly then! how fawning then on all!
With flattering Hand you courted every one;
Your Gates set wide to the inglorious Vulgar;
Familiar with the meanest; hearing all,
And seeking those who fought not _Agamemnon._

_S 3_ Yes,
Yes, with obsequious Bows you brib’d the Mob
To give that Empire you so ill can bear.
No sooner had you gain’d your Wish, Command,
But all your supple Manners were thrown by:
You to your Friends no more confess’d the Friend;
Hard of Access, and rarely seen abroad;
All mean and low! A Man of Honour should
Then be most fix’d, and zealous for his Friends,
When by his Fortune he can most assist them.
As soon as I perceiv’d this Shameful Error,
I like a Friend and Brother told you of it.
Again in Aulis here—
Since the great Gods deny’d to swell our Sails
With prosperous Gales, your haughty Spirit fell;
You were dismay’d, dejected, and forlorn:
The Grecians cry aloud to be dismiss’d,
And not to languish in this Port in vain.
How wretched hast thou been, and how inglorious!
How full of Anguish, Agonies of Death!
Had You then ceas’d to lead these strong Battalions,
To fill the Trojan Fields with warlike Greeks?
In this Distress you then could think of me,
Ask my Advice how to avoid this Shame.
But then when Calchas from the Victims found,
Your Daughter offer’d at Diana’s Altar,
Would give the Greeks a safe and speedy Voyage;
Thy well-pleas’d Eyes confess’d the sudden Joy
That spread it self thro’ all thy inward Pow’rs;
Thy ready Tongue declar’d thy willing Mind,
That she should know the Goddes’ sacred Knife,
Free, unconstrain’d, and not by any Force.
Pretend not that your high Commands you sent
That she to Aulis should with speed repair;
Deceiv’d by thee, with the false promis’d Joy
Of being the long-wish’d Bride of great Achilles.
But here by a strange Whirle and Change of Will,
You other Letters send to countermand her.
You will not be the Murderer of your Daughter!
How many thus with an unstedy Hand
Do steer the dangerous Helm of Government!
Fond to engage in some great bold Design,
Yet swift to quit it, when they are engag'd:
Awd' by the People some, and some more unjustly
Compell'd to guard from Foes their own Dominions.
But I th' unhappy Fate of Greece deplore
All aim'd, and ready to assault the Foe,
And with full Glory quaff the proud Barbarian,
Are left their Sport and Scorn——
For the Repose of the great Agamemnon!
Oh! ne'er advance a Man for Wealth or Power:
Wisdom alone deserves supreme Command,
And a wise Man is naturally a King.

Chor. All Brothers Quarrels are unhappy things.

Agam. With Truth I shall reproach you in few Words,
For Insolence like this deserves not many;
A Brother's Name shall teach my injur'd Tongue
A Modesty, it seems, to you unknown.
The Modesty does seldom touch the Base;
For when bright Honour has the Breast forlook,
Seldom confederate Modesty prevails.
Then, tell me, Sir, the Cause of all this Rage:
Whence all this Anger? whence this Indignation?
Who is't that injures or affronts you here?
What is't you want? pray what is your desire?
Your virtuous Wife? your happy nuptial State?
At my Expence must I restore your Wifhes,
Which, when possess'd, your own ill Conduct lost you?
What! to regain your beauteous faithless Wife,
Woul'd you thus tread on Honesty and Reason?
The Pleasures of ill Men are evil all!
O! vain! O! doating Madness! O! blind Folly!
The Gods, indulgent to thy Happiness,
Have rid thee of a false, injurious Wife,
And thou, fond Fool, now burn't with strange Desire,
To force the distant Plague home to thy Bosom!
The Suiters to this Helena with you,
Each, by fallacious Hope of her betray'd,
To Tynd'rus swore, that with united Arms
They woul'd defend the happy Man she chose.
Apply to these, with these pursue the War,
But conscious of the Weakness of that Oath,
Compell’d by Fraud or Folly, you despair:
If I forfake your foul detested Cause,
Will not be strong enough to lead them on.
But Menelaus, this assure thy self,
My guiltless Child, for you I shall not murder.
Shou’d I comply, wild Horror and Remorse
Would haunt my daily Thoughts and nightly Slumbers.
What I have said is, Sir, so plain and easy,
You need no Comment to explain my Meaning.
But if you still to Justice will be blind,
I shall however, Sir, protect my own.

Chor. This differs from the former, yet it teaches,
That of our Children we should take just Care.
Mene. O Gods! how very wretched am I grown!
I have no Friends!

Agam. Yes, yes, you shall have Friends,
If you will not destroy ’em.
Mene. O! in what,
In what do you confess the Friend and Brother,
Of the same Father born?

Agam. I shall be wife,
Not mad with you.
Mene. Friends Griefs are common.

Agam. Then call me Friend, when you design no harm.
Mene. This Obstinate’s vain, for sure thou know’st
In this thou must contend with Greece, not me.

Agam. Greece too, like thee, by some ill Fury’s haunted.
Mene. O! proud and vain of Empire! thou betray’st
To that thy Brother: But I shall apply
To other Arts, and other Friends for Justice. [Going.

Enter Messenger.

Meff. O! Agamemnon, King of all the Greeks,
I bring you pleasing News! now in the Camp
Your Daughter Iphigenia is arriv’d,
And Clytemnestra your beloved Queen,
With young Orestes—This Royal Troop,
After so long an Absence, must be welcome.
With speed I came before, to bring the News:
The Army throngs to see the glorious Sight.
Some talk of Nuptials for the Royal Virgin;
Some, that she comes to be in sacred Rites
Of great Diana here initiated.
But you, O Agamemnon! crown your Brows,
And, Menelaus, share the nuptial Joys.
Let Musick and the Dancers celebrate
This happy Day.

Agam. Thy Zeal and Joy I do commend, be gone,
I of the rest will take peculiar Care.
Ah me! O! wretched Agamemnon!
What shall I say? O! where shall I begin?
Into what Noose of Fate am I now fall'n?
'Tis the malicious Cunning of my Fortune
Thus to prevent my just paternal Care.
O! happy State of mean and low Degree!
Their Grief at liberty may vent her Moans,
And give their mournful Thoughts a plaintive Tongue:
But Greatness is confin'd to hateful Form.
The People us, not we the People govern.
Proud Majesty denies my Woes Relief,
Shame floods the flowing Torrent of my Grief,
But not to weep, is yet a greater Shame!
Thus a chain'd Slave I prove to a great Name.
I must curb Nature, and deny its Course;
And tho' I'm fal'n into the greatest Woe,
That any mortal Wretch can ever know;
Yet in my Breast the Anguish must contain,
And only I my self must know my Pain.
But O! my Wife! what shall I say to her?
How shall I meet her? with what Looks behold her?
Her coming has redoubled all my Woe!
She comes unsent for, no invited Guest.
Yet who can blame the tender Mother's Care,
To do the dearest Office to her Child?
But now the foul perfidious Cause she finds
Of her most inauspicious Journey.
For how shall I refrain the burstsing Tears,
When I receive the tender hapless Virgin!
Ha! now methinks I see her suppliant knee
With lifted Hands, and upcast streaming Eyes,
And trembling Lips, thus pitifully pleading:
O! Father will you kill me? will your Hand,
A Father's Hand, give me to such Nuptials?
And then the little Infant, young Orestes,
In broken Sounds, and yet intelligible,
Accuse me of his dearest Sister’s Murder!
Alas! alas! how have the cursed Nuptials
Of the Barbarian Paris thus destroy’d me!
For he has brought these cursed Evils on me.

_Mene._ Give me your Hand, give me your dearest Hand!

_Agam._ Here take it, for it is your Victory.

_Mene._ By Pelops our Grandfather, and our Father Atreus,
I swear, my Brother, what I’m going to say
Are the sincerest Dictates of my Mind.
I could not see the Tears fall from thy Eyes,
Thy awful Eyes, but Pity split my Soul,
And the big Drops run tumbling down my Face.
My Rage ebb’d out apace, and now I see
I ought not to be happy by thy Misery.
Now by the Gods you shall not touch your Daughter,
Thy Iphigenia, is, for me, immortal.
Why shou’d thine die, and mine remain alive?
Helen is not so dear to this fond Breast,
To make me trample Nature under foot,
And purchase her Embraces by thy Blood.
The Heat of Youth, and my untam’d Desire
Made me speak madly when I urg’d the Deed.
O! ’tis a dreadful thing to slay one’s Child,
To dip our Hands in our own Offspring’s Blood!
’Tis monstrous! ’tis unnatural!
No let the Army be dismiss’d with Speed,
And march away from Aulis to their Homes;
But cease thy Tears, by Heav’n I cannot bear them.
I never will urge more the fatal Theme.
By all the Gods she shall not die for me;
For what has she to do with Helena?
By Jove I love my Royal Brother so,
I wou’d not be the Cause of his Unrest,
To be the happy Monarch of the World:
And my Heart akes, that e’er I shock’d thee so.
We may repent, with Honour, our Misdeeds.

_Chorus._ Generously haft thou said, O Menelaus!
And worthy Tantalus, the Son of Jove.
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Agam. O Menelaus! I do feel thy Kindness,
That thou hast thus deceiv'd my Expectation,
In Words that truly do confess the Brother.

Mene. Passion may sometimes warp a generous Mind,
But such a cruel Kindred I abhor.

Agam. But Oh! my Brother, such hard Fate surrounds me,
I cannot 'scape this bloody Sacrifice;
For Iphigenia must a Victim fall.

Mene. Who can compel you to destroy your Daughter?

Agam. The whole Grecian Army.

Mene. Send her back to Argos.

Agam. That cannot be; I cannot so deceive them.

Mene. You ought not by the Vulgar thus be aw'd.

Agam. Calchas, alas! the Oracle will reveal.

Mene. Suppose him dead. The Dead can tell no Tales.

Agam. O! but that Son of Sisyphus knows all.

Mene. In what can Ulysses injure Agamemnon?

Agam. His artful Tongue commands the Soldiers' Hearts.

Mene. He's fond indeed of popular Applause.

Agam. O! think him, therefore, by the Troops surrounded,

The secret Oracle by Calchas told,
Divulg'd to the listening Warriors Ears;
My Piety stiling impious Sacrilege,
Refusing to the Grecian Glory
The Victim that Diana has requir'd.
The Army won by these his smooth Pretences,
Both you and I shall fall by their dire Rage;
Yet by our Death not save my Daughter's Life.
Suppose we fled to Argos from the Camp;
My Flight, with Fire and Sword they would pursue,
And lay my Country waste. It w'not be!
I must be wretched, and my Child must die!
Thick Woe and Misery surround me!
Into these Straits the Gods reduce me!
But O! my Brother! this alone canst thou,
Let not my Wife the fatal Business know,
Before my Child I've offer'd up to Pluto;
That with the fewest Tears I may be unhappy.

Tho' I have taken some Latitude in the Translation,
and made bold to leave out sometimes a Word or two,
and sometimes a Line or two, which related more to
Custom than the Passion; yet I have been far from
making Euripides amends for what he loses in the Trans-
lation. As it is, I leave it to be by the Reader com-
par'd with that of Mr. Dryden in Troilus and Cressida,
and that of Shakespeare in this Play.

This indeed is a juister way of Trial of our Poet's ex-
celling the Antients, than what Mr. Hales of Eaton, my
Lord Falkland, &c. took in the Comparison of To-
picks; for if he here prevail, he will indeed get a Vic-
tory in a real Province of Poetry. I am surpriz'd that
so judicious a Poet as Racine shou'd omit this admi-
rable Scene in his Iphigenia in Aulis, at the same time
that he made a quarrelling Scene betwixt Agamemnon
and Achilles. I have said so much on the two most
beautiful Parts of this Play, that I shall leave the rest
to the Reader; this being a Play so often acted, that
they are obvious to every body.

Of Lowliness or Humility.

But 'tis a common Proof,
That Lowliness is young Ambition's Ladder,
Whereto the Climber upward turns his Face.

On Conspiracy.

O! Conspiracy!
Sham'th thou to shew thy dangerous Brow by Night?
When Evils are most free.

There is one thing in this Play which I remark for
those judicious Gentlemen, who by a swelling gouty
Stile have set up for fine Language in the Drama. The
Stile of this Play is, generally speaking, plain, easy, and
natural.
The Argument of Macbeth.

Duncan, King of Scotland, has two Sons, Malcolm and Donalbain: His General against the Rebels and Norwegians (who then invaded that Country) is Macbeth, a Kinsman of the Crown; and with him is join’d in Commission, Banquo; who returning victorious, on an open Heath meets with three Witches, who salute Macbeth three times, the last Salutation being, King that shall be. Their other Salutations proving true, he and his Wife resolve to make the third so. In the Night therefore they murder Duncan, and lay it on his Chamberlains. Malcolm and Donalbain fly away, on which they are accus’d of having employ’d them to kill their Father: so the Election falls on Macbeth, who being now King, has Banquo murder’d for fear of his Race; for the wayward Sistres told him, that he should get a Race of Kings, but his Son Fleance makes his Escape. Murders and Tyrannies growing every day, Macduff flies to the English Court, and with much ado convinces Malcolm of his Fidelity, and with him comes into Scotland with English Forces, having first heard that the Tyrant had surpriz’d his Castle, and kill’d his Wife and Children. Macbeth having consult’d the Witches, is told, that he shall not be kill’d by any Man born of Woman; nor till Birnam Wood came to his Castle, of Dunsinane. But his Wife, haunt’d with Remorse for the Murders she had been Partner in, dies; and he finding the Deceit of the Witches Assurance of Birnam Wood, by the English Army’s taking every Man a Branch of a Tree in his Hand, ventures out to fight, and is at last kill’d by Macduff, who was ript out of his Mother’s Womb.

To say much in Praise of this Play I cannot; for the Plot is a sort of History, and the Character of Macbeth and his Lady are too monstrous for the Stage. But it has obtain’d, and is in too much Esteem with the Million, for any Man to say yet much against it.

The
REMARKS on the

The Topicks and Lines of this Play are less in Number and Beauty than most of his. A celebrated Speech is that of Macbeth after he has committed the Murder.

Methought I heard a Voice cry, Sleep no more! Macbeth doth murder Sleep.

I need not say any thing here about the Witches, since what I have said of them and Spirits in The Tempest is sufficient: he has drawn those Chimera's wonderfully, and made them Forms and Ceremonies according to their black Mysteries.

Life.

Life's but a walking Shadow, a poor Player,
That struts and frets his Hour on the Stage,
And then is heard no more. It is a Tale
Told by an Idiot, full of Sound and Fury,
Signifying nothing.

The Argument of Hamlet Prince of Denmark.

Hamlet Son of the former King of Denmark, is put aside the Election by his Uncle Claudius, who marry'd his Mother soon after his Father's Death; which was succeeded by the walking of the Ghost of the deceas'd King. Hamlet being inform'd of it, goes to the Watch, sees, and speaks to the Ghost; who tells him, that his Uncle, who now possess'd his Throne and Wife, murder'd him as he lay asleep in his Garden, by pouring Poison into his Ear. So desiring Revenge, the Ghost vanishes. Hamlet obliges all who had seen it to keep the Secret, and by no means discover that they had beheld any such Sight. Hamlet assumes a sort of Madness, and the Queen loving him very well, is solicitous to know the Cause; which Polonius the Lord Cham-
Chamberlain persuades them to be the Love of his Daughter, on her rejecting his Letters and Address, according to her Brother's and Father's Orders. *Hamlet* willing to discover whether the Ghost had told him true, orders some Players, who came then to Elsinore, to act such a part as the Ghost had inform'd him the King had been guilty of; desiring Horatio, his Friend, to observe him all the Action: but when the poisoning of his Brother in the Garden came to be acted, the King unable to see more, rises up, and breaks off the Play. This confirms *Hamlet* in his Resolution of revenging his Father's Death. But the King highly affected with this, retires; while his Mother is order'd to check him for his Conduft: but Polonius advises the King to let him hide himself, to overhear what passes betwixt them, for fear the Mother's Indulgence should not discover all. As *Hamlet* is going to his Mother, he finds the King at Prayers, and therefore will not kill him, because he took his Father in his Sins. He is so rough with his Mother, that she cries out for Help! and Polonius alarm'd, does the same; but *Hamlet* taking him for the King, kills him behind the Arras: Then charges the Queen home with her fault of marrying her Husband's Brother, &c. owns that he is not mad; the Ghost of his Father comes into the Room, which heightens her Agony. They part, the Queen promising not to reveal ought to the King. The King is resolv'd to send *Hamlet* to England with Rosencroes and Guildenstern, with private Orders for him to be put to death there; but *Hamlet* aboard, getting their Commissions from them, found the fatal Order, and keeps it, supplying the place with a fresh Order to put the Ambassadors to death. So he comes back, and in the Church finds a Grave digging for Ophelia, who running mad on her Father's Death, was drown'd. And Laertes coming back from France, was but just hinder'd from revenging his Father's Death on the King; but is assur'd that he would help in his Revenge, by engaging *Hamlet* to try his Skill with him at Foils, whilst *Hamlet* should have a Blunt, and Laertes a Sharp, which he poison'd. But in the Scuffle, the Queen drinks to *Hamlet*, but drinks the Poison prepar'd.
REMARKS on the par'd by the King for Hamlet; who being now wounded, got the Sharp from Laertes, and wounds him. The Queen cries out that she is poison'd, and so Hamlet kills the King. Laertes confesses the Contrivance, and dies; as Hamlet does immediately after.

Tho I look upon this as the Master-piece of Shakespeare, according to our way of writing; yet there are abundance of Errors in the Conduct and Design, which will not suffer us in justice to prefer it to the Electra of Sophocles, with the Author of his Life; who seems to mistake the matter wide, when he puts this on the same foot with the Electra. Hamlet's Mother has no hand in the Death of her Husband, as far as we can discover in this Poem; but her fault was in yielding to the incestuous Amour with her Husband's Brother; that at least is all that the Ghost charges her with. Besides, Shakespeare was Master of this Story, but Sophocles was not. Orestes' farther was commanded by the Oracle to kill his Mother; and therefore all moral Duties yielding to the immediate Command of the Gods, his Action, according to that System of Religion under which Sophocles wrote, had nothing in it of Barbarity, but was intirely pious, as Agamemnon's sacrificing his own Daughter Iphigenia, on Diana's Order.

This Play indeed is capable of being made more perfect than the Electra, but then a great deal of it must be thrown away, and some of the darling Trifles of the Million, as all the comical Parts intirely, and many other things that relate not to the main Action, which seems here to be pretty intire, tho not so artfully conducted as it might be. But I wander from my Point; I propos'd not to show the Errors especially, when this Play contains so many Beauties. Hamlet every where almost gives us Speeches that are full of the Nature of his Passion. The Advice of Laertes to his Sister, is very moral and just, and full of prudential Caution: and that of Polonius to his Son; and that of the same to his Daughter, Ay, Springes to catch Woodcocks, &c. If the young Ladies would study these Pages, they would guard their Virtues and Honours better than many of them do. All the Scene betwixt Hamlet and the Ghost
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is admirable, as the Ghost's Description of his Residence in the other World.

Virtue and Lust.
— But Virtue, as it never will be mov'd,
Tho Lewdness court it in the shape of Heaven;
So Lust, tho to a radiant Angel link'd,
Will fate it self in a celestial Bed, and prey on Garbage.

Ophelia's Description of Hamlet's mad Address to her.

My Lord, as I was sowing in my Chamber,
He took me by the Wrists, &c.

Ambition.
Which Dreams indeed are Ambition; for the very Substance of the Ambitious is merely the Shadow of a Dream.

On Man.
What a piece of Worth is Man! How noble in Reason! How infinite in Faculty! In Form and Moving, how express and admirable! In Action, how like an Angel! In Apprehension, how like a God! The Beauty of the World, &c.

In Hamlet's Speech to the Players, Shakespeare gives us his whole Knowledge of the Drama; and for that reason, this favourable Judgment of a Play that did not please the Million, is what should teach some of our successful Poets not to value themselves merely on Success, since the Million often fail, tho', as Horace says, they sometimes hit right.

Interdum Populus rectum videt, est ubi peccat.

Hamlet. I heard thee speak me a Speech once, but it was never acted; or if it was, not above once: for the Play, I remember, pleas'd not the Million, it was Ca-
R E M A R K S on the
viare to the General. But it was (as I receiv’d it, and others, whose Judgment in such matters cry’d to the top of mine) an excellent Play—well digested in the Scenes, set down with as much Modesty as Cunning, &c.

On Players and Plays.

*Ham.* Let them be well us’d, for they are the Ab-
stracts and brief Chronicles of the Time.

I have heard that guilty Creatures, sitting at a Play,
Have by the very Cunning of the Scene
Been struck so to the Soul, that presently
They have proclaim’d their Malefaictions, &c.

The Power and Force of Tragedy, in this and other
Particulars, has been confirm’d by undoubted History.
*Alexander,* Tyrant of *Phocis,* a City of Thessaly, seeing
the *Hecuba* of *Euripides* act’d, found himself so affected,
that he went out before the end of the first Act, saying,
"That he was ashamed to be seen at that Misdif-
tune of *Hecuba* and *Polyxena,* when he daily imbr’d
his hands in the Blood of his own Citizens." He was
afraid (says the admirable *Dacier*) that *his* Heart should
be truly mollify’d; that the Spirit of Tyranny would
now leave the Possession of his Breast, and that he
should come a private Person out of that Theatre, into
which he enter’d Master. The Actor who so sensibly
touch’d him, with difficulty escap’d with his Life; but
was secure’d by some Remains of that Pity, which was
the Cause of his Crime.

I cannot here omit what Benefit the City of *Athens* it
self receiv’d from some Verses of the *Eletra* of *Euripides,* in its greatest distress: for when it was debated,
that the City of *Athens* should be destroy’d, and the
Country laid waste, a milder Course was taken by the Commanders, from one of them repeating these Verses out of the *Eletra* of *Euripides*:

"Elestra! O unhappy Queen!
Whither would you fly? Return:
Your Absence the forsaken Groves
And desert Palace seem to mourn."
This hook them (says Plutarch in the Life of Lyson-der) and gave an occasion to reflect how barbarous it would appear to lay that City in ruin, which had been renown'd for the Birth and Education of so many famous Men.

_Hamlet's Soliloquy._

_Death, or to die._

To be or not to be; that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the Mind to suffer
The Slings and Arrows of outrageous Fortune,
Or to take Arms against a Sea of Troubles,
And by opposing, end them.

_Calamity._

Be thou as chaste as Ice, as pure as Snow,
Thou shalt not escape Calamity.

_Hamlet's Advice and Directions to Players is very good, containing very good Precepts of a just Pronunciation; which being as useful for those who judge, as those who act, I shall take more notice of them._

_Ham._ Speak the Speech, I pray you, as I pronounc'd it to you, trippingly on the Tongue. But if you mouth it, as many of our Players do, I had as lieve the Town-Cryer had spoke my Lines. Nor do not saw the Air too much with your Hand thus, but use all gently; for in the very Torrent, Tempest, and (as I may say) the Whirlwind of Passion, you must acquire and beget a Temperance, that may give it Smoothness. O! it offends me to the Soul, to see a robousitous Periwig-pated Fellow tear a Passion to Tatters, to very Rags, to split the Ears of the Groundlings; who, for the most part, are capable of nothing, but inexplicable dumb Shows, and Noise, &c. And a little further —— Be not too tame neither, but let your own Discretion be your Tutor. Suit the Action to the Word, and the Word to the Action; with this especial Observance, that you o'ertop not the Modesty of Nature: for any thing so overdone
overdone, is from the Purpose of Playing, whose End
both at the first and now, was and is, to hold as 'twere
a Mirror up to Nature; to show Virtue her own Fea-
ture; Scorn, her own Image; and the very Age and
Body of the Time, his Form and Pressure. Now this
over-done, or come tardy of, tho' it make the Unskilful
laugh, cannot but make the Judicious grieve: The
Censure of which one, must, in your allowance, over-
sway a whole Theatre of others. O! there be Players,
that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that
highly (not to speak it profanely) that neither having
the Accent of Christians, nor the Gate of Christian,
Pagans, nor Norman, have so strutted and bellow'd,
that I have thought some of Nature's Journey-men had
made Men, and not made them well, they imitated Hu-
manity so abominably.——And let those that play
the Clowns, speak no more than is set down for them;
for there be of them, that will of themselves laugh,
to set on some quantity of barren Spectators to laugh
too, tho' in the mean time some necessary Question of
the Play be then to be consider'd. That's villainous,
and shows a most pitiful Ambition in the Fool that
uses it.

These Precepts of Shakespeare are as valuable as any
thing in him; for indeed, thorowly study'd and under-
flood, they teach the whole Art of the Stage: which re-
lates to the Representation or the Actors, who still are
too commonly guilty of these very Follies, which Shake-
fpeare observ'd in the Players of his Time.

I shall say no more in explanation of this here, de-
signing a particular Discourse on the Art of Pronunci-
ton and acting: for it is not sufficient for a Player to
speak well, he must give what he says its true Action; he
must look his Part, he must be the Man he represents, ac-
cording to the very Lineaments of the Passion or Humour
which he represents, or else he is no Actor. They are
call'd Actors, not Speakers; and a Mistake in the accent-
ing a Word, or even in a vicious Tone of Utterance,
may be forgiven: but an ill Action is an Error in the
Fundamentals. There is a Lady on the Stage, who might
perhaps be sometimes out in her Speaking, but always so
charming
Plays of Shakespeare.

405 charming in her Action, that she would not suffer a Lover of the Art not to sink the smaller Error in the greater Beauty. Our Actors are very liable to neglect the Decorum of the Representation, who tho they have form'd themselves to the Figure of a passionate Man as long as he speaks, yet when the Opposite speaks are as calm as if unconcern'd in the matter; whereas in Nature, no Man in Anger, Love, or Grief, but minds what the other says, and is as much concern'd in it, as if he spoke himself. In this particular, no Body can excel Mrs. Barry, whom I have frequently observ'd change her Colour, and discover a Concern that equal'd Nature: This is no Flattery to her but barely Justice.

But not to dwell on this Subject, or anticipate what I have to say in a longer Discussion of this Point, let us return to the fine things of this Play of Hamlet. His Speech to Horatio has many good Lines. The Queen's Protest in the Play that's introduc'd, and the King's Discourse with her, is worth reading, for the Lines and the Reflections. The Scene betwixt Hamlet and his Mother, is generally very well; tho perhaps it is capable of Improvement. That part of the Scene where the Ghost comes in, is very strong; as indeed Shakespeare is in the former Scene, which, as I have been affur'd, he wrote in a Charnel-House in the midst of the Night.

On Man.

What is Man——
If his chief Good and Market of his Time, &c.

The Discourse betwixt Hamlet and the Grave-maker is full of moral Reflections, and worthy minding; tho that Discourse itself has nothing to do where it is, nor is of any use to the Design, and may be as well left out; and whatever can be left out, has no business in a Play; but this being low Comedy, has still left to do here. The Character Hamlet gives of Osrick is very satirical, and would be good any where else.

The
The Argument of King Lear.

Lear King of Britain has three Daughters, Goneril, Regan, and Cordelia. Goneril is marry'd to the Duke of Albany, Regan to the Duke of Cornwall, and the King of France and Duke of Burgundy are Pretenders to Cordelia. The King being old, divides his Kingdom betwixt his three Daughters, reserving only an hundred Knights for himself, and the Name of King. But the two elder, by their mighty Professions of Love and Duty beyond measure, win the Father's Heart, now alienated from Cordelia, because she daub'd not her Affections over with empty Professions; so that old Lear in a Passion gives away her Share to her other Sisters, and with his Curse leaves her to France, who takes her for his Wife, tho rejected by Burgundy. The two Daughters, Regan and Goneril, soon fall from their Duty, and grow weary of the King, are uncivil to his Followers, would abridge them, nay, take them quite away; when in a stormy Night he is turn'd out of the Earl of Gloucester's House, with orders to him not to relieve him. The Earl of Gloucester, shook with Horror at these unnatural Proceedings, acquaints his bastard Son of his Intentions to affit the King, and that the French were come over to his Aid: but he betrays him, and so his Eyes are put out, and he turn'd out of doors; being inform'd that his bastard Son had done it all, by whom deceiv'd, he had believ'd his own Son Edgar had contriv'd his Death, and who, for fear of the Proclamation, wander'd like Tom of Bedlam. He meets with the King, and with his Father afterwards, on whose Head there being a Price set, Goneril's Steward meeting him, offers to kill him, but is prevented by Edgar's killing of him; about whom he finds Goneril's Letters to the Bastard, being in Love with him, and also a Design against the Duke of Albany her Husband. To whom he carries it before the Battle betwixt the Britons and the French under Cordelia's Command, whom she brought to the King's assistance against her unnatural Sisters: but being beaten, and the King and the taken Prisoners,
Plays of Shakespeare.

Prisoners, the Bastard orders them to be kill'd in Prison. And Edgar having fought and kill'd the Bastard, Regan being poison'd by her Sister Goneril, and she being upbraided by her Husband with the Guilt, but more affected with the Loss of Edmund, kills her self. The Bastard owns his Warrant out against the King and Cordelia; they send to save them, but come too late, Cordelia being hang'd; and the King, having kill'd the Rogue that hang'd her, breaks his heart, and dies: so the Play ends.

The King and Cordelia ought by no means to have died, and therefore Mr. Tate has very justly alter'd that Particular, which must disgust the Reader and Audience, to have Virtue and Piety meet so unjust a Reward. So that this Plot, tho of so celebrated a Play, has none of the Ends of Tragedy, moving neither Fear nor Pity. We rejoice at the Death of the Bastard and the two Sisters, as of Monsters in Nature, under whom the very Earth must groan. And we see with Horror and Indignation the Death of the King, Cordelia, and Kent: tho, of the three, the King only could move Pity, if that were not lost in the Indignation and Horror the Death of the other two produces. For he is truly a Tragick Character not supremely virtuous, nor scandalously vicious; he is made up of Choler and Obstinance, Frailties pardonable enough in Old Men, and yet what drew on him all the Misfortunes of his Life.

The Bastard's Speech, of the weakness of laying our Fate and Follies on the Stars, is worth reading— This is the excellent Foppery of the World, that when we are sick in Fortune, &c.

Lear's Passion, on the Ingratitude of his Daughter Goneril, is very well; and his Curses on her very well, and naturally chose. Lear's Speech to Regan, is very well—

No, Regan, thou shalt ne'er have my Curse.

And his Passion in this whole Scene agreeable to the Manners.
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The Needs of Life few.
O reason not the Need! our basest Beggars
Are in the poorest things superfluous:
Allow not Nature more than Naure needs,
Man's Life is cheap as Beasts, &c.

Kent's Description of the tempestuous Night, is very good.

— Things that love Night,
Love not such Nights as these. The wrathful Skies
Gallow the very Wanderers of the Dark, &c.

There is nothing more beautiful than Lear's first Starts
of Madness, when Edgar comes out in the Habit of a
Madman—- 'Didst thou give all to thy Daughters?
' And art thou come to this?' And again—- 'Have
'his Daughters brought him to this pass? Couldst thou
'save nothing? Wouldst thou give 'em all?'—-

Now all the Plagues, that in the pendulous Air
Hang fated o'er Mens Faults, light on thy Daughters.
Kent. He has no Daughters, Sir.
Lear. Death, Traitor, nothing could have subdu'd
Nature
To such a Lowness, but his unkind Daughters, &c.

Edgar's Account of a Serving-Man is very pretty; as
all that he says in the Play is according to the Character,
which his Affairs oblige him to assume.

On Man.
Man is no more than this, consider him well!
Thou ow'rt the Worm no Silk, the Beast no Hide,
The Sheep no Wool, the Cat no Perfume. How!
Here's three on's are sophisticated. Thou art the thing it
self.
Unaccommodated Man is no more,
But such a bare, poor, forked Animal
As thou art——

Edgar's
Edgar's Description of the Precipice of Dover-Cliff is very good:

How fearful and dizzy 'tis to cast one's Eye so low, &c.

Against the gross and idolatrous Flattery of Princes, see Lear's Madnefs: 'They flatter'd me like a Dog, and told me that I had white Hairs in my Beard ere the black ones were there; to say Ay and No to every thing I said—Ay and No too was no good Divinity. When the Rain came to wet me once, and the Wind to make me chatter; when the Thunder would not peace at my bidding; there I found 'em, there I smelt 'em out—Go to! they are not Men of their words: they told me, I was every thing; 'tis a Lye, I am not Age-proof.'

For this Story read Milton's and Tyrrel's History of England; and Leland, with Geoffrey of Monmouth, &c.

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The Argument of The Moor of Venice.

Othello, a Noble Moor or Negro, who had by long and faithful Services and brave Deeds establish'd himself in the Opinion of the Senate of Venice, wins the Affections of Desdemia, Daughter to Brabantio one of the Senators, marries her unknown to her Father, and with the Senators leave carries her with him to Cyprus, his Province. He makes Cassio his Lieutenant, tho Iago had solicited the Post by his Friends for himself: which Refus'al join'd with a Jealousy that Othello had been too familiar with his Wife, makes him contrive the Destruction of Cassio and the Moor, to gratify his Revenge and his Ambition. But having no way to take a vengeance on the Moor, proportion'd to his imaginary and double Injury but this, he draws him with a great deal of Cunning, into a Jealousy of his Wife; and that by a Chain of Circumstances contriv'd to that pur-
purpose, and urg'd with all the taking Initiations imaginable. Othello, by these means won to a Belief of his own Infamy, resolves the Murder of his Wife and Cassio, whom he concluded guilty. Iago undertakes the dispatching Cassio, whose Commission he had already got; which designing to do by Roderigo, who had been his Dupe, in hopes by his means to enjoy Desdemona, and who now grew impatient of any longer Delay; he missing his aim, is wounded, and kill'd outright by Iago, to stop him from telling any Tales of him. But the Moor effectually puts his Revenge in execution on his Wife; which is no sooner done, but he is convinc'd of his Error, and in remorse kills himself: whilst Iago, the cause of all this Villany, having mortally wounded his Wife for discovering it, is borne away to a more ignominious Punishment; and Cassio is made Governour of Cyprus.

I have drawn the Fable with as much favour to the Author, as I possibly could; yet I must own, that the Faults found in it by Mr. Rymer, are but too visible for the most part. That of making a Negro the Hero or chief Character of the Play, would shock any one: for it is not the Rationale of the thing, and the Deductions that may thence be brought, to diminish the Opposition betwixt the different Colours of Mankind, that would be sufficient to take away that which is shocking in this Story; since this entirely depends on Custom, which makes it so: And when a common Woman admits a Negro to a Commerce with her, every one almost starts at the Choice; much more, in a Woman of Virtue. And indeed Iago, Brabantio, &c. have shewn such Reasons, as make it monstrous. I wonder Shakespeare saw this in the Persons of his Play, and not in his own Judgment. If Othello had been made deform'd, and not over-young, but no Black, it had removal of most of the Absurdities; but now it pleases only by Prescription. 'Tis possible, that an innocent tender young Woman, who knew little of the World, might be won, by the brave Actions of a gallant Man, not to regard his Age or Deformities: but Nature, or, what is all one in this case, Custom, having put such a Bar as so opposite

a Colour; takes away our Pity from her, and only raises our Indignation against him. I shall pass over the other Observations founded on this Error, since they have been sufficiently taken notice of already. It must be own'd, that Shakespeare drew Men better than Women; to whom indeed he has feldom given any considerable place in his Plays: here, and in Romeo and Juliet, he has done most in this matter; but here he has not given any graceful Touches to Desdemona in many places of her Part.

Whether the Motives of Othello's Jealousy be strong enough to free him from the Imputation of Levity and Folly, I will not determine; since Jealousy is born often of very slight Occasions, especially in the Breasts of Men of those warmer Climates. Yet this must be said, Shakespeare has manag'd the Scene so well, that it is that alone which supports his Play, and imposes on the Audience so very successfully, that till a Reformation of the Stage comes, I believe it will always be kindly receiv'd.

Iago is a Character that can hardly be admitted into the Tragick Scene, tho it is qualify'd by his being push'd on by Revenge, Ambition, and Jealousy; because he seems to declare himself a settle Villain. But leaving these things to every Man's Humour, which is in our Age all the Rule of judging; let us take a View of what we can find beautiful in the Reflections and Sentiments.

Preferment.

'Tis the Curse of Service,
Preferment goes by Letter and Affection,
And not by old Gradation, where each Second
Stood Heir to the first, &c.

So that notwithstanding our Murmurers in the Army and other Places, we find Merit and Right have been postpon'd to Favour long before our days. Iago's Harangue against Honesty, is severe enough; and 'tis pity the Satire is too true. Brabantio urges what I before remark'd of the Improbability of his Daughter's being
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being won by the Moor, but by Charms and Witchcraft.

I do not think Othello's Account to the Senate of the Progress of his Love with Desdemona, so ridiculous as Mr. Rymer makes it; for, as for the Cannibals, and Men whose Heads grew beneath their Shoulders, &c. being Objects of vulgar Credulity, they are as probable and as moving as the Cyclops and Harpies of Virgil; and then abating for the Colour of the Moor, and the Improbability of his having that Post, the Tale has a great deal of the Pathos. Iago, to intinuate into Roderigo that he may have hopes of Desdemona, says —— 'Mark me, with what violence he lov'd the Moor, but for bragging, and telling her fantastical Lyes.'

There are in this Play, as well as in most of this Poet, a great abundance of Soliloquies, in which the Dramatick Person discourses with the Audience his Designs, his Temper, &c. which are highly unnatural, and not to be imitated by any one.

The Moor has not bedded his Lady till he came to Cyprus; and yet it is before and after urg'd, that she was or might be sated with him. But those little Forgetfulnesses are not worth minding.

Against Reputation.

Reputation is an idle and most false Impostion, off got without Merit, and lost without deserving, &c.

Content is Wealth.

Poor and Content is Rich, and Rich enough, But Riches senseless, is as poor as Winter, &c.

Othello's Soliloquy, before he kills Desdemona, has been much admir'd.
The Argument of Anthony and Cleopatra.

This Play is the History of Anthony and Cleopatra, from the Death of Fulvia to the taking of Alexandria, and the Death of Cleopatra. The Scene is sometimes at Rome, sometimes in Egypt, sometimes at Sea, and sometimes at Land; and seldom a Line allow'd for a Passage to so great a Distance: and the Play is full of Scenes strangely broken, many of which exceed not ten Lines. It is needless to write the Story, since it is known to every body, that Anthony fell in love with Cleopatra; that after Fulvia's Death he marry'd Octavia, the Sister of Augustus, to piece up the Flaws that Fulvia and mutual Jealousies had made; that however he soon relaps'd to Cleopatra, and that War ensuing, Anthony's ill Conduct lost the Day at Actium first, and afterwards at Alexandria; where he kill'd himself with his Sword, and Cleopatra with the Sting of an Aspick, to avoid being carry'd in Triumph by Augustus. In this Play indeed Sextus Pompeius is brought in, and the Treat he gave Anthony, Lepidus, and Augustus, on board his Vessel.

Augustus gives Anthony his true Character:

—When thou once
Wert beaten from Mutina; &c.

And the Concern and Care of Cleopatra in the next Page is not unnatural——c Oh! Charmion! where think'st thou he is now?—Pompey's Wish against Anthony
is very apt and pretty:

But all the Charms of Love,
Salt Cleopatra, soften thy wand Lips.
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I must not omit the Description Enobarbus gives of
Cleopatra's failing down the Cydnos, because Mr. Dryden
has given us one of the same in his All for Love; which
I shall here compare together, and leave the Decision of
the Victory to the impartial Reader.

The Barge she sat in, like a burnish'd Throne,
Burnt on the Water: the Poop was beaten Gold,
Purple the Sails, and so perfumed, that
The Winds were love-sick.
With them the Oars were Silver,
Which to the Tune of Flutes kept stroke, and made
The Water, which they beat, to follow faster,
As amorous of their Strokes. For her own Person,
It beggar'd all Description. She did lie
In her Pavilion, Cloth of Gold, of Tissue,
O'er-picturing that Venus where we see
The Fancy out-work Nature. On each side her
Stood pretty dimpled Boys like smiling Cupids,
With diverse-colour'd Fans, whose Wind did seem
To glow the delicate Cheeks, which they did cool,
And what they did, undid.
Her Gentlewomen like the Nereides,
So many Mermaids, tended her i'th' Eyes,
And made their Bends Adornings. At the Helm
A seeming Mermaid steers; the silken Tackles
Swell with the Touches of those flower-soft Hands,
That rarely frame the Office. From the Barge
A strange invisible Perfume hits the Sense
Of the adjacent Wharfs. The City cast her
People out upon her, and Anthony,
Enthron'd i'th' Market-place, did sit alone;
Whistling to the Air, which but for Vacancy
Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too,
And made a Gap in Nature.

Mr. Dryden in his All for Love, Act 3, where Anthony
gives it to Dolabella, has these words:

Her
Plays of Shakespeare.

Her Gally down the silver Cynnos row’d,
The Tackling Silk, the Streamers wav’d with Gold,
The gentle Winds were lodg’d in Purple Sails.
Her Nymphs like Nereids round her Couch were plac’d;
Where she, another Sea-born Venus, lay.
She lay and leant her Cheek upon her Hand,
And cast a Look so languishingly sweet,
As if secure of all Beholders Hearts,
Neglecting she could take ’em: Boys, like Cupids,
Stood fanning, with their painted Wings, the Winds
That play’d about her Face; but if she smil’d,
A darting Glory seem’d to blaze abroad,
That Mens desiring Eyes were never weary’d,
But hung upon the Object. To soft Flutes
The silver Oars kept time; and while they play’d,
The Hearing gave new Pleasure to the Sight,
And both to Thought. ’Twas Heaven (or somewhat more;)
For she so charm’d all Hearts, that gazing Croud
Stood panting on the Shore, and wanted Breath
To give their welcome Voice——

Both Poets are a little beholden to the Historian for at least the Ground-work of this Description.

**Fortune forms our Judgment.**

——I see Mens Judgments are
A Parcel of their Fortunes; and things outward
Do draw the inward Quality after them
To suffer all alike, &c.

**Loyalty.**

Mine Honesty and I begin to square,
The Loyalty well held to Fools does make
Our Faith mere Folly, &c.

The Incident of Eros killing himself instead of Anthony when his Back is turn’d, Mr. Dryden has borrow’d, in his *All for Love*, for *Venditius’s*. And Cleopatra’s sending him word that she had kill’d her self, is made use of in
The Argument of Cymbeline.

Cymbeline, King of Britain in the time of Augustus, having lost his Sons Guiderius and Aviragus, had only one Daughter remaining, call'd Imogen; who privately marry'd Posthumus contrary to her Father's Will, who design'd her for Cloten, the Queen's Son by a former Husband, who was a silly, affected, proud Fellow. Posthumus is therefore banish'd Britain, and goes to Rome; where he wagers with one Facimo an Italian, that he cannot corrupt his Lady. He gives him Letters to her, and he takes a Journey into Britain on purpose, tries her by Words in vain, so gets leave to put a Cheif of Treasure into her Chamber for one Night; in which being convey'd, he lets himself out when she is asleep, observes the Room, takes away the Bracelet from her Arm, views a Mark under her Breast, and retires into his Cheif again, and is the next day carry'd away by his Men: then returns to Rome, and by these Tokens persuades Posthumus that he had lain with his Wife, so has the Chain and the Ring; whilst Posthumus sends an Order to Pisanio his Man, to get his Mistref down to Milford-Haven, and there to murder her, for having betray'd his Honour in the Embraces of another. Imogen with Joy goes with him, hoping to meet her Husband there, as his Letter promis'd; but when Pisanio shew'd her his Order to kill her for Adultery, she is highly concern'd, and begs her Death: but he persuades her to stay there in Boy's Clothes, to get into the Service of Lucius the Roman General, and so she might come near Posthumus, and observe him; to whom
whom Pisanio sent word, that he had kill'd her according to his Order. Imogen in the mean while losing her way among the Mountains, wanders till she is almost starv'd; when finding a Cave and Viuals, she enters and falls to eating; where Bellarius, Guiderius and Aviragus, the Masters of that Cave, return and find her; and taking her for a Boy, are very fond of her, calling her Brother; ye. But she being sick, takes some of a Vial given her by Pisanio, which he had from the Queen as a Cordial, tho' meant for a Poison. The Brothers and the Father going again out to hunt, meet with Cloten, who was come thither in the Clothes of Posthumus, on his understanding that Imogen was fled thither; but bearing himself insolently to Guiderius and Aviragus, one of them fights and kills him, and cuts off his Head, and having triumph'd over him, threw his Head into the Sea. But returning home, they find Fidele dead (for by that Name Imogen call'd her self in that Habit) they sing her Dirge, and leave her with the dead and headless Body of Cloten. She comes to her self again, and finding a Body without a Head, and in the Clothes of Posthumus, imagines it to be him slain: and is found weeping on the Body by Lucius the Roman General, who was come now with his Army to invade Britain; Cymbeline having refus'd to pay the Tribute settled with Julius Caesar. He takes her for his Page. Posthumus being come over with the Romans, before the Day of Battel changes his Habit for a poor Country Fellow's: and Bellarius not able to restrain Guiderius and Aviragus from the Fight, goes with them, and there rescue the King now almost taken Prisoner; and the Battel being chang'd by the Valour of these four, the Romans are beat: so Posthumus puts on his Roman Habit again, that he might be taken and put to death, being weary of Life for the Death of Imogen. He therefore, with Lucius and Jacimo, are put in prison, and reserv'd for Execution. Fidele is taken by the King for his Page, and of her he is so fond, as to grant her whatever Life she demanded among the Roman Prisoners. She seeing the Ring of Posthumus on Jacimo's Finger, demands that he be oblig'd to discover how he came by it. Jacimo then

owns
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owens all the Roguery, and Posthumus then discovers him-
sel], and says that he had murder'd Imogen; who co-
ming to embrace him, he strikes her from him, sup-
posing her only a Page; but she being come to her self,
owns that she is Imogen. And the accusing Pisani
of having given her Poison, the Physician and the
Queen's Maids justify him, by letting the King know
that the Queen on her Death-bed own'd that she had
given Pisani a Draught for a Cordial that would poi-
son him, at the same time confessing her guilty Design
against the King himself. Guidianowning that he had
kill'd Cloten, the King orders him to be put to Death;
when Bellarius discovers that he and Aviragus are the
King's Sons. And Posthumus owning himself to be the
Country Fellow that behav'd himself so well, all are
forgiven, and Peace made; Cymbeline agreeing to pay
the Tribute, tho' a Conqueror.

Tho the usual Absurdities of irregular Plots abound
in this, yet there is something in the Discovery that is
very touching. The Character of the King, Queen,
and Cloten, do not seem extremely agreeable to their
Quality. This Play has been alter'd by Mr. Durfee, but
whether to its Advantage or not, I will not determine,
because I have not the Alterations by me; but I am
afraid the Gentleman who alter'd it was not so well ac-
quainted with the Rules of Art, as to be able to improve
the Cymbeline of Shakespeare. He himself makes this
Objection against a main Incident of the Play—
'2 Gent. That a King's Children should be so con-
vey'd, so slackly guarded, and the Search so slow,
that it could not trace them.—1 Gent. Howsoe'er
'tis strange, or that the Negligence may well be laugh'd
at; yet it is true, &c.' But he has here, as in other
things, slighted the Absurdity, and kept to the Error
knowingly; but the Answer he puts in the first Gentle-
man's Mouth is of no Validity, were it so, viz. Yes it
is true; for here Probability is more to be sought than
Truth, which is sometimes so merely possible, that it can
scarce find Belief. And indeed most of the Incidents
of this Play smell rankly of Romance. Jacimo's false
Accusation
Accusation of Posthumus to his Wife is well enough, and has many good Lines in it.

On Gold.

’Tis Gold
Which buys Admittance; oft it does, yea and makes
Diana’s Rangers false themselves, and yield up
Their Does to the Stand o’th’ Stealer, &c.

Against Women.
Is there no way for Men to be, but Women
Must be half Workers? &c.

The Speech of Bellarius to Aviragus and Guiderius, contains many fine Reflections.

Pisiano’s Description of the Temper of a pert Boy or Page, is a propos enough.

You must forget to be a Woman, change
Command into Obedience; Fear and Niceness
The Handmaids of all Women, or more truly
Woman its pretty self, into a waggish Courage,
Ready in Gybes, quick-answer’d, saucy, and
As quarrellous as a Weezel, &c.

Melancholy.

— O! Melancholy!
Who ever yet could found thy Bottom?

The Plot of this Play is taken from Boccace’s Novels,
Day 2. Nov. 9.

There are besides these, on which I have made no Remarks, Pericles Prince of Tyre, The London Prodigal, Thomas Lord Cromwel, Sir John Oldcastle, The Puritan, or the Widow of Watling-Street, The Yorkshire Tragedy, and Locrine; which, as I am very well affir’d, are none of Shakespeare’s, nor have any thing in them to give the least ground to think them his; not so much as a Line: the Stile, the manner of Diction, the Humours, the Dialogue, as distinct as any thing can possibly be. In the
Have thus at last pass’d thro’ all Shakespeare’s Plays, in which if any good Judge shall think me too partial to my Author, they must give me the allowance of an Editor, who can seldom see a Fault in the Author that he publishes; nay, if he publish two of the same kind, that which is then under Consideration has the Advantage, and excels even all others. Besides, if I have shown you all that was any way beautiful in him, I have also been so just to the Art, as often to point out his Errors in that Particular. And having gone over this celebrated Author with so much Care, an Author asserted by the Number of his Admirers (whom to oppose is counted little less than Herefly in Poetry) to be the greatest Genius of the modern Times, especially of this Nation; I find my self confirm’d in the Opinion I have long had of the Antients in the Drama, I mean in Tragedy: for having been so long conversant with the Confusions of want of Art in this Poet, tho’ supported with all the Advantages of a great Genius; the Beauty of Order, Uniformity, and Harmony of Design appears infinitely more charming, and that is only to be found in the Greek Poets: tho’ Orway, and a very few Plays wrote by some yet living, are not without their just Praise; but those are not such as have been the longest liv’d on the Stage, tho’ very well receiv’d: it being a difficult Matter to bring such a Town to judge of the Man by the Performance, and not of the Performance by the Man. Shakespeare is indeed flor’d with a great many Beauties, but they are in a heap of Rubbish: and as in the Ruins of a magnificent Pile, we are pleas’d with the Capitals of Pillars, the Basso-relievos, and the like, as we meet with them; yet how infinitely more beautiful and charming must it be to behold them in their proper Places in the standing Building, where every thing answers the other, and one Harmony of all the Parts
Parts heightens the Excellence even of those Parts? And thus if those partial Beauties of Shakespear could be, or had been view'd in a true Position, with their Correspondence to some perfect Whole, they would receive a Praise, that they cannot, as they are, come up to.

This would make me surpriz'd to find so many Advocates for Confusion, in the Preference they give the modern Tragic Poets above Order in Sophocles and Euripides; did I not remember that this is done by Persons who are totally ignorant of the Art, and are only pleas'd by Vogue and Whimsey: and the Authors themselves, wanting Genius and Skill, have rail'd at the Excellence they could not arrive at, being humbly content with the precarious Applause of Fools; which as it was at first given without Reason, so is lost with as little. For whilst there is no Standard of Excellence, there can be no such thing as Excellence; which is such a levelling Principle in Poetry, as all Men who would pretend to the least Merit, should, for their own sakes, explode as the genuine Child of Ignorance and Barbarism.

I am more surpriz'd to find Mr. Dryden in the Number of the Flatterers of the Poets of the Age; who having had the Education of a Scholar, heighten'd it with the Beauties of a great Genius. But his Arguments for the Moderns against the Antients, are worthy the Cause he defends, which is highly ridiculous. For his first Argument is, That the Greek Tragedies were not divided into Acts. But first he should have consider'd, that this Defect (if it be one) might be the Consequence of the Ignorance or Neglect of the Transcribers; greater Misfortunes than that having befallen Authors of that Antiquity, in the dark Times of Gothick Ignorance. But I am afraid, that I cannot easily yield that this Division into Acts is any Perfection, since it plainly breaks off the Continuity of the Action, which is by the Chorus kept on without any Pause. Aristotle has given us all the Quantitative Parts of a Play, as the Prologue or Protafs, the Episode, Exodus, and Chorus, which perfectly distinguish'd all the Business and Order of the whole Plot of the Play, for which the Moderns have given us no Rules, in regard of what is proper to each Act. 'Tis true, that in
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in the time of Horace the Distinction of Acts was receiv'd, and their Number settled as inviolable.

Neu brevior quinto, neu sit production Actu.

But tho this was no Improvement in the Art of the Drama, yet had it been so, 'tis plain, that the Moderns cou'd not make any pretence to the Invention, and by consequence can give us no manner of Advantage over the Greek Poets in that Particular.

His next Argument is——That the Tragedies of the Greeks were taken from some Tale drawn from Thebes or Troy, or at least something that happen'd in those Ages, which were so known to the Audience, that they cou'd not afford any Delight. But let us hear his own Words——‘And the People, as soon as ever they heard the Name of Oedipus, knew as well as the Poet, that he had kill'd his Father by Mistake, and committed Incest with his Mother before the Play; that they were now to hear of a great Plague, an Oracle, and the Ghost of Laius; so that they set with a yawning Expectation till he was to come with his Eyes out, and speak an hundred or two of Verses in a tragick Tone, in Complaint of his Misfortunes. But one Oedipus, Hercules, or Medea had been tolerable; good People they scap'd not so cheap; they had still the Chapon bouille set before them, till their Appetites were cloy'd with the same Dish, and the Novelty being gone, the Pleasure vanish'd—So that one main End of Dramatick Poetry in its Definition, which was to cause Delight, was destroy'd.'

I have transcrib'd so many of his own Words, merely to show the vain and wretched Triumph of a Man, who was so far from gaining any Advantage over the Antients, that he is out in every Particular. That most of the Fables were taken from those celebrated Stories of the fabulous Age of Greece, is true; but that all are so, is far from Truth: for The Persians of Eschylus was not so, and some of Agatho's, and other of the Greek Poets now lost, were pure Fictions of their own; as is plain from Aristotle's Art of Poetry, and from Horace's Rule.
Nay, this was so common a Practice, that Aristotle himself draws one of his Rules from it, and from which Horace took that just quoted. Next, Mr. Dryden was either ignorant, or forgot that tho' the same Action was written upon by several of the Greek Poets, yet the Conduct and Management of it was always different, and the Ingenuity of that Variation was extremely entertaining to so polite a People. Thus Euripides took the Story of Iphigenia in Tauris, and Polyides, and Agathon, and others did the same; yet the Discovery is made in much a different manner. Euripides makes Iphigenia, before she goes to sacrifice Orestes, write a Letter to her Brother Orestes, and give it to Pylades, to deliver to him; and left she shou'd lose the Letter, tells him the Contents of it, by which the Discovery is made, that she is Iphigenia: which, with the Proof of Orestes, saves his Life, and they both make their Escape. Polyides made a Play on the same Subject, in which Orestes was brought to the Altar to be sacrific'd; who, when he was going to receive the fatal Blow from the Hands of his Sister Iphigenia, cries out, 'As my Sister was sacrific'd to Diana, so must I be sacrific'd to the same.' This made Iphigenia know her Brother, and save him. For indeed the various and different Traditions of those Stories left the Poet at liberty to take which he pleas'd, and that gave a Variety even to the same Story: As in the Revenge of Alcmone for his Father's Death; some make him kill his Mother knowingly, as Sophocles has made Orestes in his Electra, some not knowing her till after he had done the Deed, and others prevent the Deed by a Discovery of her being his Mother. And these Discoveries were extremely entertaining to People of that fine Taste, which the Athenians had, as is plain from what Plutarch says, when he tells us, that when Merope went to kill her Son, there was a murmuring among the Spectators, which show'd not only their Attention, but the Interest.
Remarks on the Interest they gave themselves in the Misfortune of a Mother, who was going to kill her Son, and of a Son who was to die by the Hands of his Mother.

But methinks, if this had been a real Objection, he would never have chosen to write upon the Story of Anthony, after Shakespeare and some others. The various Conduct of the same Story takes away the Dullness, which he apprehends from hearing the same so often. This is confirm'd by the beginning of Mr. Dryden's own Preface to All for Love—— The Death of Anthony and Cleopatra, says he, is a Subject which has been treated by the greatest Wits of our Nation after Shakespeare; and by all so variously, that their Example has given me the Confidence to try myself in the Bow of Ulysses, among the Crowd of Suiters; and withal, to take my own Measures in aiming at the Mark.

But this indeed was written some time after the Essay on Poetry, and may therefore differ from it, as most of Mr. Dryden's critical Prefaces do. He has given another Instance in his Oedipus, wrote upon not only by the Greeks, Seneca, and Corneille, but by some of our old English Poets; yet he has told us, that they are different Plays, tho on the same Subject. His indeed differs extremely from that of Sophocles; and tho he condemns Seneca absolutely, and Corneille almost as much, yet he has taken the Description of the Plague, and the Ghost of Laius, from Seneca, and an Under-plot from Corneille: not that his Under-plot is the same, but as an Under-plot it is the same Error copy'd from a Man he condem'd. And here I can't but take notice, that of all he has said against Oedipus, in the foregoing Quotation, there is not one Particular to be found in Sophocles. He has no Ghost of Laius, he has no Stir in a Description of a Plague, nor any but an extreme pathetick Complaint of his Misfortunes.

But after all, this Talk of the Pleasure's being vanish'd after the Novelty is gone, is highly ridiculous; for this would hold good against all Plays that had been seen above once, and be more so in those of Corneille, and his English Imitations, which depend on Admiration, or the Intricacy of an Intrigue, which after it has been seen like
like a Jugler’s Tricks, when known, has nothing entertaining; for we then know it all as well as the Athenians cou’d know Oedipus, Thyestes, or any other of the Greek Stories; as for example, the Discovery in the Spanish Friar, Don Sebastian, the Accidents of the Five Hours Adventures, &c. Yet Mr. Dryden wou’d never have yielded that the Argument against the Fables of the Antients wou’d hold good against the acting or seeing any of his Plays but once. But the Passions or Manners of the Antients are so admirably perform’d, the Harmony of the Parts so charming and perfect, that they will bear viewing, like an admirable Piece of Painting, for ever, and afford a strong and lively Pleasure. It is not a little Knot, or Difficulty in a vain Intrigue, that supports a Play, or gives that Pleasure which is deriv’d from Tragedy; but it is the good and judicious Contrivance and Conduct of the whole, in Incidents productive of Terror and Compassion; and by the artful working up of the Passions, and Expression of the Manners, Sentiments, and the like, which must delight the sensible Soul, whenever they are seen.

Besides, his Description of the Oification, and languid beholding of the Athenian Plays without Pleasure, is directly contrary to the very Matter of Fact; as is plain from the Instance of Merope, I gave out of Plutarch, and from the Athenians Practice, who fat whole Days to see these Performances.

In the next place, he brings Tragi-Comedies as a Proof of the Preference of the Moderns to the Antients, tho’ as weakly, and to as little purpose to his Cause, as any thing before urg’d. But let us see his own Words—

‘I must therefore have stronger Arguments ere I am convinc’d, that Compassion and Mirth, in the same Subject, destroy each other; and in the mean time cannot but conclude, to the Honour of our Nation, that we have invented, increas’d, and perfected a more pleasant way of Writing than ever was known to the Antients or Moderns of any Nation, which is Tragi-Comedy.’
There is scarce a Word of this Quotation which is true, either in Fact or Criticism. For, first we did not invent Tragi-Comedy, as is plain from the Prologue of Plautus to his Amphitryon.

Faciem ut commissa sit Tragicomedia,
Nam me perpetuè facere ut sit Comedia,
Roges quo veniant, & Dii non par arbitror.
Quid igitur? quoniam hic servus Partes quoq; habet,
Faciem proinde, ut dixi, Tragicomedia.

Nay, this unnatural Mixture was even before Tragedy was in Perfection; that is, in the Infancy of the Stage in both Athens and Rome, till rejected, and the Stage reform'd from it by the greatest Wits and Poets of those Cities, as a Mixture wholly monstrous and unnatural. Nam Dicacitatem & Facetias per se Tragœdia non habet, quippe cui sit Risus Inimicus (ut ait Demetrius Phalerius) & in qua nil nisi miserabile & terrificum ostentatur. For Wit and Raillery belong not properly to Tragedy, to which Laughter is an Enemy (as Demetrius Phalerius observes) in which nothing is shown but what is pitiful and terrible.

Thus what the Romans and Greeks rejected from the first ignorant Performances in their first Essays of the Stage, Mr. Dryden has made the highest Perfection we have over them: and so it is indeed, for we differ from them in nothing but in retaining those Faults which the Ignorance of our first Writers brought in, which they threw aside from their ruder Sketches, that they might indeed arrive at a real Perfection.

But Mr. Dryden goes on—— He tells us, that we cannot so speedily recollect our selves after a Scene of great Passion and Concernment, as to pass to another of Mirth and Humour, and enjoy it with any Relish. But why should he imagine the Soul of Man more heavy than his Senses? Does not the Eye pass from an unpleasant Object to a pleasant one, in much shorter time than is requir'd to this? And does not the
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Unpleasantness of the first commend the Beauty of
the latter? The old Rule of Logick might have con-
vinc'd him, that Contraries plac'd near, set off each
other, &c.

I wonder he would lay the Objection so strongly, and
yet answer it so weakly. For the Soul can no more pass
in a moment from the Tumult of a strong Passion, in
which it is thoroughly engag'd, than the Sea can pass
from the most turbulent and furious Storm into a per-
fected Calm in a moment. There must be time for the
terrible Emotion to subside by degrees into a Calm;
and there must be a gradual Passage from the Extreme
of Grief, Pity, or the like, to its Opposite, Mirth, Hu-
mour, or Laughter. The Simile therefore, which he
lays down as a Proof, is so far from an Argument of
what he contends for, that it is in no manner a Parallel,
nor even will it hold in itself as here urg'd. There
is no Agreement betwixt the Passage of the Eye, from
one Object to another of different, say contrary kinds,
and a Soul work'd up to the height of Grief, Pity,
Indignation, Love, &c. starting from these in a moment
to Calm. Enjoyment of Mirth and Laughter; nor is this
any Argument of the Heaviness of the Soul, for 'tis im-
possible to quit that in a moment, in which it was en-
gag'd by Steps or Degrees. Here we have nothing to
do with Heaviness or Lightness, but in a metaphorical
Sense, meaning Dulness or Vivacity; but such a
swift Passage of the Soul from opposite to opposite, is a
Proof of a Dulness of Spirit, which could not be en-
gag'd throngly in any Passion. But the Instancy of the
Eye it self is not lightly suppos'd; for if the Eye be
fix'd with Pleasure on a grave and serious Object, sup-
pose the taking our Saviour from the Cross, by Jordan
of Antwerp, the Eye thus attach'd will neither soon nor
easily remove it self to look on a Droll-piece of Hem-
skirk, &c. But granting, that it remove with Ease and
Swiftness from an Object that is unpleasant to one that
is delightful: Will it return with the same Facility from
the pleasant to the unpleasant? as in Tragi-Comedy,
where the Soul is to start from Tears to Laughter, and
from Laughter to Tears, five times in one Play? Such a
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a Soul must be like some Children's and Women's, who
can weep and laugh in a Breath. But as Mr. Dryden
in this Instance did not consider the Nature of the Soul,
so did he not that of the Eye; for Objects are pleasing
or displeasing to that, only as they please or displease
the Mind: so that he leaves the Controversy undecided,
or rather he perfectly yields the Point, by bringing no-	hing against it, of the least Force and Validity. If by
this Instance he means only the mere mechanick Mo-
tion of the Eye, without any Concern in the Object,
it has as little to do with the Soul engag'd; for then the
Simile should be the Soul disengag'd in any Particular,
and the mere Swiftnes of the Transition of the Mind
from one Thought to another. Thus, take him which
way you will, his Instance has nothing to do with the
Matter in hand, but has left the Absurdity, where he
found it, in Tragi-Comedy. I confess most of our
Tragi-Comedies are such as engage the Passions so very
little, that the Transition from the serious to the co-
mical Part may be quick and easy; but then the Argu-
ment has nothing to do here, for that which was to be
prov'd, was the swift Transition from Grief to Mirth,
or the like.

"But (says Mr. Dryden) a Scene of Mirth, mix'd
with Tragedy, has the same Effect upon us, which our
Musick has between the Acts; and that we find a
Relief to us from the best Plot and Language of the
Stage, if the Discourses have been long."

By this he would make the comick Part of no more
relation to the Play, than the Musick betwixt the Acts,
that has none at all. But the Parallel here is as de-
fective as in the former: For the Musick employing
only Sounds, may by them contribute gradually to the
calming the Soul, restoring that Tranquillity, which
the ruffling of a great Passion had rais'd. Here is no-
thing to require the Attention of the Mind or Reason;
here is no Start from one Extremity to the other, which
confounds, and not relieves, the agitated Soul. But
according to this Notion of his, they might compen-
diously act a Tragedy and a Comedy together; first a
Scene of Tragedy, and then a Scene of Comedy: But
Plays of Shakespear.

sure Mr. Dryden, nor any of his Opinion, would ever think this a perfection, and such a perfection found out, and improv'd by us, as the Antients, nor any other Nation of the Moderns, ever knew. And yet most, if not all of our modern Tragi-Comedies, are even as if a Tragedy and Comedy were acted together; the Comick Part of them having no more to do with, or relation to the Tragick, than if it were another Play as in the Spanish Fryar, the Comedy of which has with Success been acted by it self, without any Gap in the Representation; which is a Proof that it is no Part of the Tragedy, since it is not main'd by the Separation. And yet Mr. Dryden pleasantly enough tells his Patron in the beginning of his Dedication— Accordingly I us'd the best of my Endeavour, in the management of two Plots so very different from each other, that it was not perhaps the Talent of every Writer to have made them of a Piece—Since he himself has not done it in any one Particular, unless it be by making two or three of the under-Persons of the serious Part, the chief Persons in the Comick, which yet does not connect them so but that each may be acted separately, and make a different Comedy and Tragedy; which needs no great Talent to perform, since no Poet cou'd do less in his worst Performance. Had he indeed united them so, that the Fryar, Lorenzo, Gomez, Elvira, &c. had contributed to the carrying on the Plot, or Design of the Queen, Torrismond, &c. or the Discovery of the Birth of Torrismond, or the Life of old Sancho, there had been some ground to say they were of a Piece; but whilst they carry on two several, nay different Designs, they are two distinct Plays, tho' namely tack'd together, acted together, and printed together, as one Play.

The Author's Supposition of so quick a Transition from Grief, Anger, &c. to Mirth or Laughter, wou'd go a great way to convince a sensible Man, that he seldom or never had himself experimentally felt those Emotions of Soul, which a true Passion excites, and therefore knew not how it is fix'd to a Passion, which it is engag'd in, by a well-written Scene. But in this
he was always equal to himself. He was once talking of translating Homer, and I recommended Euripides to his Pen; but he reply'd, that he did not like the Poet: which was a Proof that he had but little Taste of Nature, or that he was afraid to do that Poet Justice in the English Language, left his charming Draughts of Nature should refine our Taste, and make us contemn the tinsel Trifles of our modern Writers of Tragedy. But I am rather apt to think it was his want of a true Relish of Nature, having been early misled by a great Conversation with the French Romances, which are direct Opposites to Nature; because he told a Gentleman, being by one day at the Coffee-house, who had met with Success in some of his Plays, that he would make much such another Poet as Otway; the Gentleman justly reply'd, that he desire'd to be no greater.

I should not have taken so much pains with this Essay of Mr. Dryden, had it not been printed in his Works, without any Mark of the Alteration of his Opinion; because the ignorant Reader, who depends on his Judgment in print, will be misled by his Authority, and the Speciousness of his Reasons. And this, I hope, will be my Excuse for opposing a Man, who must by all be acknowledg'd to have much improv'd our Verification, and to have discover'd a Genius in his other Writings, which justly claims our Admiration. But that very thing is what must justify my Undertaking; since the very Authority, which his Merits give him, will be the more prejudicial in establishing his Errors.

Before I quit this Point, I must take notice, that the Author of Shakespeare's Life is of Opinion, that Tragi-Comedy will take more than Tragedies; but he having given no Instances to prove this Opinion, I must only take it for a Supposition, which has more Probability of Falsity than Truth. For we have not for some Years past had any of that kind on the Stage which have pleas'd; The Fatal Marriage and Oroonoko are the last that I can remember; and I am apt to believe, that more were pleas'd with the Tragick Part of both those Plays than with the Comick. Thus the Scene of the Historical
Plays of Shakespear. 431

Historical Dialogues of Shakespeare please by a sort of Prescription; yet let any Man in our Days bring any such thing upon the Stage, he would soon be convinc'd of his Error by a just Condemnation.

I hope, by this time, I have made it plain, that the Moderns have not got any Advantage above the Antients in the Drama, by what Mr. Dryden has urg'd in their behalf in the Particulars above mention'd: but there still remains another Objection, tho' much more modestly urg'd in his Preface to All for Love, in which Play he at last confesses, that the Antients ought to be our Masters; and allows what Horace says to be just,

—Vos Exemplaria Græca
Nocturna versate Manu, versate Diurna.

But then—Yet tho' their Models are regular, they are too little for English Tragedy, which requires to be built on a larger Compass.' Tho' I cou'd answer him from himself, in his Preface to Oedipus, after he has said more on this Point, or rather explains what he says here; yet I shall examine the weight of what he urges. But first let us hear him in the Preface fore-quoted to Oedipus. 'Sophocles is indeed admirable every where, and therefore we have follow'd him as close as ever we cou'd. But the Athenian Theatre (whether more perfect than ours, is not now disputed) had a Perfection differing from ours. You see there in every Act a single Scene (or two at the most) which manages the Business of the Play, and after that succeeds the Chorus, which commonly takes up more time in singing, than there has been employ'd in speaking. The principal Person appears almost constantly thro' the Play; but the inferior Parts seldom above once in the whole Tragedy. The Conduct of our Stage is much more difficult, where we are oblig'd never to lose any considerable Character which we have once presented.'

And a little after—Perhaps after all, if we cou'd think so, the antient Method, as it is easiest, is also the most natural, and the best; for Variety, as 'tis manag'd,
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manag’d, is too often subject to breed Distracton; and while we wou’d please too many ways, for want of Art in the Conduct, we please in none.

I confess I was not a little puzzled at the first Quotation, till I met with the second, which was as a Comment on the former. Nay, I am yet to seek what he means by a Model; he should have defin’d his Term, since ’tis plain that he means something different from what we understand by the Formation of the Design, or the Constitution of the Subject. The Reader will find, that in those Rules, which I have from Aristotle laid down for the writing and judging of a Tragedy, there is no one Rule about the seldom or often bringing in of the Characters, but that naturally follows the Constitution of the Subject: for it is certain in Reason and Nature, that none ought to be brought in, but such as are necessary to the Design, and only as they are necessary; to do otherwise, is contrary to good Conduct, and to Perfection; and if in many of those Plays of the Antients which remain, what Mr. Dryden has observ’d be true, it is no Rule to him if he forms his Story according to Art, and yet have his under-Characters more frequently on the Stage. That each Act of the Antients consists of about one or two Scenes, is a certain Perfection; but in the Laisson of Scènes, as the French call it, and in their Shortness, which I believe Mr. Dryden meant by their Model being too little for our Stage; for those numerous Scenes brought in by our Poets, do not only stretch the Play to an unreasonable Length, but generally breed a Confusion, and have no Connection to one another. So that this shews Mr. Dryden’s Error, in making a Distinction betwixt the Perfection of the Athenian Stage and that of London, in the same numerical sort of Poem, in which there can be but one Perfection, and either Athens or London must be in the wrong. But I have already prov’d Athens in the right; so that what Mr. Dryden urges for a different Perfection on our Stage, only proves a Defect, and ought therefore to be rejected, as he indeed in the end seems to confess, but lays his adhering to the Error, on the Tyranny
Plays of Shakespear. 433

Tyranny of Custom, which Men of his Authority may and ought to break and reform.

Besides that Shortness, which he objects to the Antients, is what we often with for in our modern Authors, when they tire us with their tedious Scenes for four Hours together, without ever engaging our Souls at all; and the Chorus was a more natural Relief than comick Interludes, or the Musick betwixt the Acts. That our Stage does not require a larger Compass to build on, is plain from the Orphan of Otway, which still pleases, and ever will; and yet, for the most part, it is conducted according to the Model of the Antients, and without any Under-Plot, the Episodes of it being entirely Parts of the Design, and not to be left out without maiming the whole. Whence it is plain, that it is not the fault of the Audience, but the Impotence or Ignorance of the Poet, who is not able (tho he calls this way the most easy) to travel in so smooth and pleasant a way.

But this Controversy, betwixt the Antients and the Moderns, is too copious and large to be thoroughly discussed in this Point; it has engag’d Boileau and M. Penaule in France, and Mr. Wotton and Sir William Temple in our own Country; but I think a middle Course ought to be steer’d: there are things in which they have evidently excell’d us, and to imitate which, is counted now the highest Perfection; as in Statuary, and the best Painters having made it their Study to imitate the Antique. The same must be laid in Oratory and Poetry, especially in the Tragick Poem, in which we have by no means yet been able to rival them. We have had some Poets who have happily describ’d some things finely, and given us many pretty and fine Reflections and Topicks; but there is no Order, no Decorum, no Harmony of Design, nay, no Relation of the Parts to each other; but as Horace says,

Inceptis gravibus plurumque; et magna professis,
Purpureus late qui splendet, unius et alter
Affuitur Pannus. Cum Lucus et Ara Diana,
Vol. X. U

Et
They can patch a lame Plot with some fine Lines, some pretty Similes, can make a fine Description of a Battel, of a Grove, or the like; but all these thrust into their wrong Places, where they have not the least to do. And these are the Men who exclaim against the Rules, and by a senseless Noise set up for Patrons of Confusion, and Enemies to Harmony and Order: as if any one should prefer the rambling Prelude of a Performer, (who by the way seldom knows any thing of the Composition) to the fine Sonata's of Corelli, or the admirable Composition and Harmony of Parts in a Piece of Henry Purcell. One is only a Proof of the Volubility of the Performer's Fingers, the other the Power of Musick, that moves the Soul which way it pleases.

But there may be some tolerable Reason given why these Poets, that have even those Skantlings of Poetry, shou'd surprize the Town into an Admiration of their Performances, as our Shakespear, and Mr. Dryden in his Plays: but the Success of some, since them, is wholly unaccountable, who are full as faulty in their Plots or Designs, and yet have scarce one Line in a Play that discovers any Reflection.

Among these, are our Lady Poets, who, like Juno in the Production of Vulcan, are always deliver'd of Cripples. I beg the Ladies pardon, I do not exclude them from all manner of Poetry; they have, in all Ages, succeeded in the lesser Poetry: but no Woman of any other Nation, that I know of, except England, ever pretended to meddle with the Drama. Magalostrate, the Mistress of Alcmeon the Lyrick Poet; Sappho, one of whose Poems are still extant, and whose Writings were admired by Longinus himself; she wrote Elegies, Epigrams, Monodes, and iamblcks; and her Friend Erinna, and her Cotemporary Demophila; Theano, the Wife of Pythycoras; Cleobulina, who wrote Enigma's; Corinna, who was Mistress of so much Excellence, and so good a Lyrick Poet, that she was call'd the Lyrick Mule, and had five times the Victory over the famous
famous Pindar of Thebes: Thelesilla, Praxilla, Aspasia, a second Erinna, Myro, Eudoxia the Wife of Theodorus the younger; Damocharis, Helenica of Alexandria, Moeio, Nossis, a Lyric Poetess, some of whose Poems are still extant; and Philænis. All these we have had from Greece, and not one of them attempted the Drama. Now for the Latins, who are but very few. Corinphcia, whose Epigrams are still extant; Sempronii; Theophila, the Wife of Caius the Poet; Proba; Roswyd a Nun, who writing in Latin Verse, is put among the Latin Poets. But in England we have had almost as many Ladies in the Stock and Buskin as Men. But to these I would address what Plato has made Sophocles and Euripides say to a young Poet; who thus speaks to them: 'I can make Verfes tolerably well, and I know how, in my Descriptions, to extend a mean Subject, and contract a great one: I know how to excite Terror and Compassion, and to make pitiful things appear dreadful and menacing. I will, therefore, go and write Tragedies.' Sophocles and Euripides answer him thus, 'Do not go so fast, Tragedy is not what you take it to be; 'tis a Body composit of many different and well-fitted Parts; of which you will make a Monster, unless you know how to adjust them. You may know what is to be learnt before the Study of the Art of Tragedy, but you don't yet know that Art.'}

But this ought to be addressed to the Male Writers as well the Female; for it has been the ill writing of the former, which gave them the Assurance to attempt a thing, in which they could see no difficulty, while they saw nothing but the wild Compositions of the Times.

But this is a Subject which I have a Design to touch more closely, when I shall examine all the taking Plays of the latter Years, and deliver a Critique upon them in such a manner, that the Ladies themselves may judge of the Ridiculousness of those things which we now call Tragedies. For the Fate of that Point of the Drama depending much on the Boxes, the Labour will not be disagreeable to give them such Demonstrations, as may, without Difficulty, inform their Understandings and Judgments.
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Tho this gradual way of reforming the Stage, may be something tedious; yet since there is no other way to obtain that Happiness, but the Government's having an immediate Inspection of it, or by deputing as many Judges of the Drama as were in Athens; where each of the Ten Tribes chose a Judge, who acted upon Oath: but that can never be done, while private Interest has the Direction of a publick Diversion; for that has no Regard to any thing but itself.

I shall here take my leave of the Plays of Shakespeare, and shall proceed to the Consideration of his Poems, which are publish'd in this Edition, and are more perfect in their kind, than his Plays; as will appear by making a Judgment of them by those Rules which I shall lay down as the Guides to Perfection in them.

The End of the Remarks on the Plays of Shakespeare.
Remarks on the Poems of Shakespeare.

I come now to Shakespeare's Poems, the Publication of which, in one Volume, and of a-piece with the rest of the Works, gave occasion to my Perusal of his other Writings, with so much Attention, that I could not easily be impos'd on by any spurious Copy of that Poet. 'Tis true, there may perhaps be a Michael Angelo found, who may copy the Antique so admirably, as to puzzle the greatest Masters; but then the very Copy must have the Beauty and Merit of an Original. Thus I am confident, that tho the Poems this Volume contains are extremely distinguish'd in their Excellence and Value, yet there is not one of them that does not carry its Author's Mark and Stamp upon it; not only the same manner of Thinking, the same Turn of Thought, but even the same Mode of Dress and Expression, the Decomponds, his peculiar sort of Epithets, which distinguish his from the

U 3 Verses
From off a Hill, whose concave Womb reworded
Aplaintful Story from a Sifting Vale, etc.

And in his Plays this very Epithet we find particularly,
That even her Art sists the natural Roses.' But to
compare all the Poems in this manner, wound be an end-
less Work, and make almost as many Volumes as his
Plays; and it would be perfectly unnecessary, since
whoevers knows any thing of Shakespeare, will find his
Genius in every Epigram of these Poems, in every Par-
ticular I have mention’d; as the frequent Catachreses,
his Starts aside in Allegories, and in short his Verifica-
tion, which is very unequal: sometimes flowing smooth-
ly, but gravely, like the Thames; at other times down-
right Prose. He never touches on an Image in any of
them, but he proves the Poem genuine.

But some perhaps, who are for under-valuing what
they have no share in, may say, that granting them to
be Shakespeare’s, yet they are not valuable enough to be
reprinted, as was thought by the first Editors of his
Works, who would otherwise have join’d them all toge-
ther.

To this I answer—That the Assertion is false; or were it not, it is more than the Objeotor knows by his
own Judgment and Understanding: but to prove it false, we need only consider, that they are much less imperfect
in their kind, than even the best of his plays, as will ap-
pear from the Rules I shall lay down immediately. In
the next place, the first Editors were Players, who had
nothing to do with any thing but the Dramatick Part,
which yet they publish’d full of gross Mistakes, many of
which remain to this day; nor were they by any means
Judges of the Goodness or Badness, of the Beauties or
Defects of either Plays or Poems.

There is next an Objection, that if these Poems had
been genuine, they had been publish’d in the Life-time
of the Author, and by himself; but coming out almost
thirty
Poems of Shakespear. 432

thirty years after his Death, there is great Reason to suspect that they are not genuine.

To this I answer, that if nothing was to be thought his but what was publish'd in his Life-time, much the greater number of his Plays would be as liable to this Objection as his Poems. Next, here is indeed no weight in the Objection: Is there any thing more common, than the Publication of Works of great Men after their Death? It is more than thirty Years since the Death of the Ingenious Butler, yet it is certain that Mr. L——l of the Temple has a Manuscript of his in his hands, perhaps more valuable than his Hudibras, and in the same kind of Verse, because the Subject would afford greater matter for so fine a Genius to work on: and if this Gentleman should be prevail'd upon to do the dead Author the justice to publish this to the World, could this Objection rob his Memory of the Work, and make it spurious? No, no, there is a Likeness in one Man's Children generally, which extends not beyond the Family; and in the Children of the Brain it is always so, when they are begot by a Genius indeed. Besides, these Poems being most to his Mistress, it is not at all unlikely, that she kept them by her till they fell into her Executors hands, or some Friend, who would not let them be any longer conceal'd. But after all, there were more in proportion of these Poems in this Volume printed in his Life-time, than of his Plays; as is plain from his Venus and Adonis, his Tarquin and Lucrece, and several Epigrams and Sonnets.

There is a Poem in this Book call'd the Passionate Shepherd, which gives us a strong Proof of its being Shakespear's; for Sir Hugh the Welsh Levite, in the Merry Wives of Windsor, to appease his Choler or his Fears, as he is waiting to fight Dr. Caius, repeats often some of the Lines: as,

By shallow Rivers, to whose Falls
Melodious Birds sing Madrigals;
There will I make our Peds of Roses;
And a thousand fragrant Posies.

U 4 This
This at least proves it a known and celebrated song when Shakespeare wrote that Play, which was years before his death.

There is yet another proof of the poems being genuine; for there is in them the song which begins the fourth act of Measure for Measure at length, whereas there is but one stanza of it in the play, which is,

Take, O! take those lips away
That so sweetly were forsworn,
And those eyes the break of day
Lights which do mislead the morn.
But my kisses bring again,
Seals of love, tho seal'd in vain.

The stanza omitted in the play, is,

Hide, O! hide those hills of snow,
Which thy frozen bosom bears,
On whose tops the pinks that grow,
Are of those that April wears;
But my poor heart first set free,
Bound in those icy charms by thee.

This leads me to a book lately publish'd, containing only some few of his poems confudely put together; for what is there call'd the Passionate Pilgrim, is no more than a medley of Shakespeare's, thrown into a heap without any distinction, tho they are on several and different subjects: As for example. The first stanza in these poems is call'd, The False Relief: the next stanza is call'd, The Temptation: and on quite another subject, tho incorporated into one under that general title of The Passionate Pilgrim: the next stanza is call'd, Fast and Loose, and still on another subject: the next stanza, tho join'd as the rest as part of the same poem, is on a subject vastly different from that of the former stanza, and is call'd, The Sweet Provocation: the same holds good of the next, which is call'd, The Constant Vow.
I might go on with the rest of them, which confound the Reader, and very much injure the Poet, by palm- ing on his Memory such absurd Incoherences, as none but such a wise Editor cou'd ever have stumbled on.

Again, the Poems are not only in that Book thus ri- diculously blended together in a preposterous Mixture, but some of them are lame and imperfect; to instance in one, which is here call'd, The Passionate Shepherd. The Answer to that, in the Book we mention, is not above six or seven Lines; and here it is as long and as beautiful as the Shepherd's Address, nay, in my opinion, much better.

Tho' Love and its Effects are often happily enough touch'd in many of these Poems, yet I must confess, that it is but too visible, that Petrarch had a little in- fected his way of thinking on that Subject: Yet who- ever can admire Mr. Cowley's Mistresses, has a thousand times more cause of Admiration of our Shakespeare in his Love Verses; because he has sometimes such Touches of Nature, as will make amends for those Points, those Epigrammatica Acumina, which are not, or ever can be, the Product of a Soul truly touch'd with the Passion of Love.

The Poem of Venus and Adonis has been much admir'd, since it has of late come to be known to the Curious; and there are a great many very beautiful Images and Lines in it. Bion, one of the Minor Greek Poets, has wrote on the same Subject, with this difference: The British Bard has taken more of the Story in; that is, he has given us a Draught of the last Scenes of the amorous Essays of the Passion of Venus on the Youth, as well as of his Death and her Lamentations upon it; whereas the Edyllum of Bion only laments his Death. However, this furnishes us with an Opportunity of making a better Comparison betwixt our Poet and the Antients, than that which Mr. Hales of Eaton, my Lord Falkland, and the rest took in opposition to Ben John- son. I the more willingly do this, because the Right Honourable the Earl of Winchelsea has translated this very Piece with a great deal of Address, which I shall here give you, as I find it in Print.

The
The First Edyllum of Bion, On the Death of Adonis.

Translated by the Right Honourable the Earl of Winchelsea.

Mourn all ye Loves! the fair Adonis dies!
The lovely Youth in Death's embraces lies!
Rise, wretched Venus, and to Mourning turn
The Tyrian Robes thy beauteous Limbs adorn:
Thy panting Bosom beat in wild Despair,
And pierce with thy Complaints the yielding Air.
Mourn all ye Loves! the fair Adonis dies!
The lovely Youth in Death's Embraces lies!

Ah! how his Breast seems lovely to the Sight!
The Tusk that wounded him is not so white.
The sparkling Lustre now forsakes his Eyes,
And from his Lips the rich Carnation flies:
The charming Youth lies breathless on the Plain,
And Cytherea's Kisses are in vain.
Mourn all ye Loves! the fair Adonis dies!
The lovely Youth in Death's Embraces lies!

Tho' wide the Wound upon his Thigh appears,
The tender Goddess' Breast a larger bears.
Close by his side his faithful Dogs attend,
And howling o'er the Corps, the Skies they rend.
The mountain Nymps their sad Distraction show,
But Venus' Griefs no Limits will allow.
Bare-footed to the Defart she repairs,
With Looks disorder'd, and neglected Hair,
And her soft Flesh the cruel Brambles tear.
Mourn all ye Loves! the fair Adonis dies!
The lovely Youth in Death's Embraces lies!
Poems of Shakespeare.

The Rocks and Floods lament his hapless Fate,
Adonis, still Adonis they repeat.
The Flow'r's a universal Sorrow shew,
And weep his Fall in pearly Drops of Dew.
But Venus o'er the pathless Mountain flies,
And Hills and Valleys echo to her Cries.
Mourn all ye Loves! the fair Adonis dies!
The lovely Youth in Death's Embraces lies!

Who can the Cyprian Queen's sad Story know,
Without lamenting her disaftrous Woe?
With Arms out-stretch'd she grasps the fleeting Air,
And cries, Adonis stay! stay lovely Fair!
At length I've found thee! fly not my Embrace,
My glowing Kifs shall warm thy bloodless Face.
With eager Lips I'll draw thy parting Breath,
Receive thy Soul, and suck thy Love in Death.
This farewell Kiss I never will resign,
And tho you leave me, that shall still be mine.
Far off you fly, Adonis, and must go
To visit the remorseless King below.
But as a Goddesfs, far more wretched I
Immortally am curs'd, and cannot die.
Mourn all ye Loves! the fair Adonis dies!
The lovely Youth in Death's Embraces lies!

The Queen of Love assumes a widow'd State,
And round her, little Loves unactive wait!
She blames thee, too rash Youth! alone to dare
Encounter savage Beasts, himself so fair.
Mourn all ye Loves! the fair Adonis dies!
The lovely Youth in Death's Embraces lies!

As many Tears fair Venus' Eyes supply,
As Drops of Blood fell from Adonis' Thigh:
From which successively were seen to rise
From Blood the Rose, from Tears Anemonies.
Mourn all ye Loves! the fair Adonis dies!
The lovely Youth in Death's Embraces lies!
REMARKS on the
Fair Citherea, from the Woods retire;
No longer there lament your loft Desire:
The Nuptial Bed for your cold Love prepare,
Who looks (as sleeping) charming still and fair.
On golden Bolsters raise his heavy Head,
So let him lie, tho pale his Looks, and dead!
In his rich Garments lay him gently down,
The fame that us’d thy happy Nights to crown.
Let Flow’rs and Garlands o’er the Corps be spread;
But they, since he’s no more, will quickly fade.
With fragrant Essences perfume the Air,
Since he is gone, who was all sweet and fair.
Now deck’d in Purple soft Adonis lies;
The little Loves attend with weeping Eyes,
And strive by different ways their Grief to show;
This tramples on his Dart, that breaks his Bow;
A third i’th’ Air his useless Quiver throws;
A fourth th’ embroiler’d Slipper would unloose.
In golden Cups another Water bears,
One washes off the Blood his Thigh besmears:
Another beats officiously the Air,
And with soft Pinions fans the breathless Fair.
All Hymen’s Torches on the Threshold lie
Extinguish’d, and the Marriage Garland by.
Hymen’s no longer sung, but all around
Adonis is become the mournful Sound.
The pitying Graces in the Confort move,
And mourn th’ unhappy Citherea’s Love.
Her boundless Grief the fatal Sistres share,
Endeavour to recat the beauteous Fair,
But cruel Proserpine is deaf to Prayer.

I need not transcribe that of Shakespeare, since by turning to the Page you may find it. The particular Complaint of Venus, in Bion, begins,

---Meινον Αδαινι,
Αυστος μεινον Αδαινι, ττ.
Poems of Shakespeare. 445

The Similes in Shakespeare are generally very good; as that,

Ev'n as an empty Eagle sharp by Fasst,
Tires with her Beak on Feathers, Flesh, and Bone, &c.

And that in the next Stanza but one:

Look how a Bird lies tangled in a Net,
So fasten'd, &c.

But it would be tedious to refer to all the Similes, since there is scarce a Page but has one or more very well adapted to the heightning of the Subject. 

Venus's Speeches to Adonis, allowing now and then for some Petrarchisms, are natural and pathetick enough, expressing her Eagerness of Desire:

O! Pity! 'gan she cry, flint-hearted Boy, &c.

The Description of the Horse of Adonis, and all that passes from the Jenner's coming out of the Coppice, is very lively; her Speech to him likewise.

O! fairest Mover on this mortal Round! &c.

And her Reply to him.

What canst thou talk (quoth she) haft thou a Tongue?

Her Description of the Terrors of the Boar, and her Diffusions from hunting, are very good. But she seems something too long and particular in her Persuasion to his courting or hunting the timorous Hare. Shakespeare was at least a young Poet when he wrote this; it being, as he tells his Patron in his Billet Dedicatory, his first Essay: I suppose he means in this kind, for certainly some of his Plays were wrote before it, being infinitely less perfect in the Diction and Versification. Her chiding of Death, expresses that Terror in lively Colours.

Besides
446 REMARKS on the

Besides the Similes and pathetick Speeches, there are scatter'd up and down some Topicks well express'd, as.

On Love.
Love is a Spirit all compact of Fire,
Not gross to sink, but light, and will aspire.

And,

On Love and Lust.
Call it not Love, for Love to Heaven is fled,
Since sweating Lust on Earth usurps his Name, 

There is also something fine on the Power of Love.

The next Poem is upon the Rape of Lucrece by Tarquin. I have ventur'd to make this Edition differ from the former, because those few Notes that us'd to be printed with it, are very childish and superfluous, and doubtles not design'd to be committed to the Press by the Author; they being only to point out in Prose to the Reader what he has before his Eye in Verse. This Poem in my Opinion is much inferior to the former, tho a much better Subject for a Poem. Lucrece is too talkative, and of too wanton a Fancy for one in her Condition, and of her Temper; yet there are many good Lines, and some very good Topicks, tho a little too far spread, as those of Night, Opportunity, and Time.

O! Comfort-killing Night! Image of Hell,
Dim Register and Notary of Shame, 

And,

O! Opportunity! thy Guilt is great!
'Tis thou that execut'st the Traitor's Treason, 

And,

Misshapen Time! Cope'smate of ugly Night,
Swift subtle Post, Carrier of grisly Care, 

These, tho they express a great many Properties and Effects of the Topicks, are yet too curious and too long to entertain a Lady in so desperate a Condition as Lu-
Poems of Shakespeare.

cree was; and the same will hold good of several things, before she gives herself the fatal Wound.

There are some other common Places in this Poem worth minding, as of the Avaritious, tho' brought in by way of Simile:

Those that much covet, are of Gain so fond,
That oft they have not that which they possess, &c.

Which is the Sense of this Latin Saying, Tam deest avaro quod habet, quam quod non habet.

And on the same Subject,
The aged Man that coffers up his Gold, &c.

There are two Verses very like this of Claudian:

Regis ad Exemplum totus componitur Orbis.

For Princes are the Glass, the School, the Book,
Where Subjects Eyes do learn, do read, do look.

I urge not this, to charge him with Plagiarism, but only to shew, that if the Similitude of Thought may be a Proof of his having read the Classics, as well as the finding no such, an Argument that he had not; these, and various other Instances, which I might give from both his Poems and Plays, would prove that he was not so unacquainted with them, as some Gentlemen would persuade us. There are in this Poem, as well as in the former, a great many fine Similes.

There is besides in this Poem, I think, a Proof of his knowing Virgil; for he has painted Sinon, as Virgil has done before him: I do not mean totidem verbis; but has given him the same Character, and so plainly, that this is visibly taken from that.

All that I have to say of the Miscellaneous Poems, is, that they are generally Epigrams, and those perfect in their kind, according to the best Rules that have been drawn from the Practice of the Antients, by Scaliger, Lilius Giraldus, Minturnus, Robertellus, Gorraus, Pofsevius, Pontanus, Raderus, Donatus, Poffius, and Va-
448 REMARKS on the vassor the Jesuit, at least as far as they agree: But it is not to be suppos'd, that I should give you here all that has been said of this sort of Poesy by all these Authors; for that would it self make a Book in Folio. I shall therefore here only give you some concise Rules for this, and some other Parts of the lesser Poetry, on which Shakespeare has touch'd in these Poems: for he has something Pastoral in some, Elegiac in others, Lyric in others, and Epigrammatic in most. And when the general Heads of Art are put down in all these, it will be no hard matter to form a right Judgment on the several Performances.

I shall begin with those excellent Rules in the present Duke of Buckingham’s Essay on Poetry; of which he says justly,

’Tis not a Flash of Fancy, which sometimes Dazzling our Minds, sets off the slightest Rhimes; Bright as a Blaze, yet in a moment done; True Wit is everlasting, as the Sun, Which tho sometimes behind a Cloud retir’d, Breaks out again, and is by all admir’d. Number and Rhime, and that harmonious Sound, Which never does the Ear with Harshness wound, Are very necessary, yet but vulgar Arts: For all in vain these superficial Parts Contribute to the Structure of the Whole, Without a Genius too; for that’s the SOUL: A Spirit which inspires the Work throughout, As that of Nature moves the World about; A Heat that glows in every Word that’s writ; ’Tis something of Divine, and more than Wit: It self unseen, yet all things by it shown; Describing all Men, but describ’d by none.

As all is Dulness, where the Fancy’s bad, So without Judgment, Fancy is but mad. And Judgment has a boundless Influence, Not only in the Choice of Words, but Sense. But on the World, on Manners, and on Men, Fancy is but the Feather of the Pen;
Poems of Shakespeare

Reason is that substantial useful Part,
Which gains the Head, while t'other wins the Heart.

First then, of Songs, which now so much abound:
Without his Song, no Pop is to be found;
A most offensive Weapon, which he draws
On all he meets, against Apollo’s Laws.
The nothing seems more easy, yet no part
Of Poetry requires a nicer Art:
For as in Rows of richest Pearl there lies
Many a Blemish, which escapes our Eyes,
The least of which Defects is plainly shown
In some small Ring, and brings the Value down:
So Songs should be to just Perfection wrought.
Yet where can we see one without a Fault?
Exact Propriety of Words and Thought,
Expression easy, and the Fancy high;
Yet this not seem to creep, nor that to fly;
No Words transtpos’d, but in such Order all,
As tho hard wrought may seem by Chance to fall.

Next, Elegy, of sweet but solemn Voice,
And of a Subject grave exacts the Choice:
The Praise of Valour, Beauty, Wit, contains,
And there too oft despairing Love complains.
Their greatest Fault, who in this kind have writ,
Is not Defect of Words, or Want of Wit:
But should this Mufe harmonious Numbers yield;
* And every Couplet be with Fancy fill’d;
If yet a just Coherence be not made
Between each Thought, and the whole Model laid
So right, that every Step may higher rise,
Like goodly Mountains, till they reach the Skies:

Trifles

* Tho this be an admirable Observation, yet I am afraid it will never please some of our late Writers of Poems; who have nothing but a Company of Lines put together without any Design: and yet they have gone down with our Fators of the Muses, as good Payment, and meritorious of Reward, as well as Reputation.
TRIFLES like such perhaps of late have past,
And may be lik'd a while, but never last.
’Tis Epigram, ’tis Point, ’tis what you will,
But not an Elegy, nor writ with Skill,
No Panegyrick, nor a Cooper’s-Hill.

A higher Flight, and of a happier Force
Are * Odes, the Muses most unruly Horse;
That bounds so fierce the Rider has no Rest,
But foams at mouth, and moves like one possess’d.
The Poets here must be indeed inspir’d,
With Fury too as well as Fancy fir’d.
Cowley might boast to have perform’d his part,
Had he with Nature join’d the Rules of Art:
But ill Expression gives sometimes Allay
To that rich Fancy that can ne’er decay;
Tho’ all appear in Heat and Fury done,
The Language still must soft and easy run.
These Laws may seem a little too severe,
But Judgment yields, and ♠ Fancy governs here,
And makes the Work much easier than it seems.

I shall only add a few words of the Epigram which his
Grace has not touch’d upon.

Vavassor defines it, in his Treatise on this Subject,
thus: ‘An Epigram is a short Copy of Verses, with
‘Beauty

* Pindarics.

† My Lord here does not mean, that Judgment entirely leaves
the Rule to Fancy in this Poem; for that would be a direct Con-
tradiction to what his Grace has said before, and make the writ-
ing at all about it superfluous. For indeed there is no sort of
Poem, that leaves so arbitrary a Sway to Fancy: because that
would be to put that sort of Poem quite out of any Tact of Ex-
cellence; than which, there can be no greater Absurdity in any
manner of Writing. Besides, in Pindaric Poems the happy
Transitions and Digressions, and the natural Return to the Subject,
contains an Art peculiar to it self, and which cannot be done
without a Mastery of Judgment. And this is the Excellence of
Pindar himself, but what a few or none of our modern Gentlemen
ever think of. If they fill a Sheet or two of Paper with some ir-
regular
Poems of Shakespeare. 451

'Beauty and Point treating of one only thing, and concluding with a more beautiful Point.' It is defin'd much to this purpose by another Author—'An Epigram is a short and simple Poem, deducing something of some one Thing, Person, and Fact.'

So that its Parts (says Vavassor) are but two; the Expressing or Reciting the Subject, and the Conclusion: and its Beauties are Brevity, and Acumen, which I term Point.

As to the Length of an Epigram, the Number of Verses are not agreed on among the Critics. Some say it must not exceed two Lines; others allow four at most: asserting, that all above that Number are Excrecency and vicious. But since in Catullus we sometimes find above fifty Verses, we may excuse our selves for not yielding our Assent to their dogmatic Rule. 'Tis true,

regular Rhimes, and various Numbers, they immediately intitle it a Pindaric Poem. Not that I deny the Poet the same Liberty in English, which Pindar himself took in Greek; but I would not have him imagine, that it is in this Particular that his Excellence is distinguish'd from all their Lyric Poets, who took a less Liberty, or rather Licence of Verse. I know the Ingenious Mr. Congreve has attempted to prove a Regularity of the Numbers of Pindar, but I am afraid there is too much of Fancy and Imagination in it. Horace, I am sure, in the second Ode of his 4th Book, tell us of Pindar,

---Numerisque sertur
Lage solatis.

And Mr. Cowley, who seems perfectly acquainted with this Author, and who made him his Study for some time, is of another Mind; for thus he says, in his Preface to his Pindarics:

'And lastly (which were enough for my Purpose) we must consider that our Ears are Strangers to the Mufick of his Numbers, which sometimes (especially in his Songs and Odes) almost without any thing else, makes an excellent Poet. For the the Gramarians and Criticks have labour'd to reduce his Verses into regular Feet and Measures (as they have also those of the Greek and Latin Comedies) yet in effect they are little better than Prose to our Ears.'

I have seen a Pindaric in English, which is not yet publish'd, call'd the Female Reign, which, if I am not much deceiv'd, has come closer to the fine Transitions and Returns of Pindar to the Subject, than I have before seen in our Language.
that *Martial* but once in all his Epigrams reaches to twenty six Lines, and another time to twenty; confining himself in all his other Poems to five or six Dittics; so that we should (says the Jesuit) rather keep within the compass that *Martial* by his Practice prescrib'd, than venture to the larger Number of *Catullus*. But since *Catullus* has by all been prefer'd to the latter, we have no reason to prefer the Practice of *Martial* to his.

The way to attain Brevity, is not to aim at many things in the whole Epigram; then to express even that little as concisely as possible, and in such words, that to extend it into more, would enervate and lose the Force and Strength of the Thought, and the Point or Acumen.

The next Quality is Beauty; that is, an exact and harmonious Formation of the Whole, and the apt Agreement of all the Parts of the Poem, from the beginning to the end, with a certain sort of Sweetness, as of a natural Colour without any Fucus, on the one hand, and yet without any thing low and mean, on the other: and tho' it be plain and rude Nature, yet not a mere rustic Simplicity void of all Art, but that which is agreeable to a Court-Conversation, and the Language of the Polite. The Beauty of the Epigram must always be accompa-nied with Sweetness: And this varies according to the Subject. If that be delicate, soft, tender, amorous, &c. those Qualities will arise from the well expressing the Nature of the Subject, that will give Beauty and Sweet-

ness. In the Language we ought rather to avoid that which is harsh, or an Enemy to Sweetness, than to study too much to find out that which may help and in-
crease it. The Point is what the Epigrammatical Crit-

ticks stand much upon, which is chiefly in the Conclu-
sion, by ending with something unexpected or biting.

All things are the allow'd Subject of the Epigram, as long as they are treated of with Brevity, Point, and Beauty.

How far *Shakespeare* has excell'd in this way, is plain from his Poems before us; but this must be allow'd him, that much of the Beauty and Sweetness of Expression, which is so much contended for, is lost by the Injury of
Time, and the great Change of our Language since his Time; and yet there is a wonderful Smoothness in many of them, that makes the Blood dance to his Numbers.

This Abridgment of the Rules of this sort of Poetry, must serve for this time; since I have already run out beyond the bounds prescrib'd. I may hereafter be a little more accurate on this Head, if ever there be any Prospect that our great Men will grow weary of Trifles and Gawds, (to use one of Shakespeare's Words) and have the Relish of Art, and good Poetry, and good Sense.

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**FINIS.**